

# LONDON SOCIETY.

APRIL 1878.

## CRESSIDA.

BY BERTHA THOMAS, AUTHOR OF 'PROUD MAISIE.'

### CHAPTER VIII.

#### ROCKS AHEAD.

It was in the nature of things that the arrival of strangers at Monks' Orchard should be a stirring event in the chronicles of Lullington, which were apt to run dry at that time of year, Lent, when there was every temptation for Lullingtonians to earn a very cheap reputation for piety by giving no parties. But for the appearance of these strangers on the scene to produce an orthodox, favourable sensation, it should have taken the orthodox course. First, the news of their coming should have been bruited abroad long before the event, their name known, looked out in various social dictionaries, and their exact passport to favour drawn up, so that Lullington should have ample leisure and evidence to make up its mind as to the amount of attention due to the new-comers. Now the whole transaction had been conducted in a thoroughly random and unconventional way. Lullington hardly knew that the place was let until the tenants were on the eve of coming to take possession. They came, and had been installed there for a fortnight

or more before the general neighbourhood was aware of the fact. Lullington hated the erratic, which upset all its calculations, and seemed to make the ground shaky on which it stood. It took its revenge in wholesale condemnation of erratic people, though usually alleging some other reason than their eccentricity.

'We smell a rat,' was the watchword now. Who was this widow de Saumarez? who doubtless, they charitably surmised, had private reasons—perhaps shady antecedents of some kind—for not courting notice in Lullington, the unexceptionable and pretergentee.

However, the late lamented De Saumarez was ascertained to have held a distinguished military position, the son's name appeared in the *Army List* among the officers of a crack regiment, and at last somebody turned up who knew the widow, antecedents and all, and proved her to be thoroughly *en règle*, and something more.

She was a very clever and agreeable person, though that was neither here nor there, and she had a good jointure and a charming house in London, where she gave charming dinner-parties to all the

'best' people. As for the stepson, those who knew—showing the singular moderation with which gentlemen pronounce judgment on each other, in salient contrast to the eagerness with which ladies tear each other's characters to pieces—were more reserved. He had been 'rather wild,' some one admitted considerably, who had known him in India. 'Least said, soonest mended,' was left to be inferred.

The next news was that during their first fortnight they had had relays of visitors up and down from London. Clearly, then, they were not dependent on their country neighbours for society. Could this be why they had kept aloof? Could it mean that they held their heads so high as not to care to know Lullington? What, then, could have been their object in coming to reside there? Lullington might rack its brain over this riddle for ever. It was one without an answer. Elise had had no design. She cared too little for things to trouble herself to lay long trains. She took up plans at a moment's notice, and laid them down as readily. Her ill-health had been the cause deciding her to skip a London season. Next it occurred to her that it would be a pleasant thing to take some nice country retreat for a year, and her eye had been accidentally attracted to Tom Kennedy's advertisement by its comically bad grammar. She recollected the place near Fernswold; it had taken her fancy from a distance, because it was like a French *château*; and she at once made up her mind that it was exactly the sort of thing she was in search of. It would be agreeable, too, to have Cressida for her nearest neighbour. Then the 'rather wild' Alec, who was at present in England, and on leave, might, if she made the house lively with visitors, be induced to quit

London for a while, and come down to share her villeggiatura, an additional reason in its favour, as it might keep him out of mischief, and from running through money at his present pretty appalling rate. This was a laudable motive, however, which did not strike her until after the step had been taken.

She and he had always remained on good terms by virtue of her excessive tolerance and leniency. No one who knew Alec intimately had a grain of respect for him; but respect was a feeling Elise was scarcely capable of feeling, and therefore never missed. She professed to know only two classes of people, bores and non-bores; and it was only the first she objected to have about her. She supposed he would tone down one of these days, if he lived long enough. In the mean time, he was very good-tempered and entertaining. It would be a pity to quarrel with him, and thus snap a link that might in the end draw him from his evil ways into the fold of domestic life. She could not recognise how, on the other hand, her cold, clever cynicism, her plausible effrontery, had largely helped to demoralise him.

Yes, she rather liked Alec. He was a gentleman, careful about his personal appearance, just escaping foppishness by the dare-devil touch in him that gave mettle to a languid exterior. He was slender and young-looking, and a walking illustration of the proverb concerning those who may steal the horse, yet come off scot-free. Stories of his startling irregularities went about, and scandalised all hearers, with the curious exception of those who were personally acquainted with the hero. For his looks were such a splendid piece of humbug that, though he really never made the slightest pretence to be anything but the arrant

scamp that he was, his prettiness lied for him so effectually that the usual impression he made was one of softness, almost of refinement, and he was rarely judged as severely as he deserved. So difficult was it to estimate the nature of his amiable depravity, that he was commonly put down as 'not a bad fellow,' though perhaps a little weak, and short of brain. Quite a false valuation. True, Alec might have been plucked by a fourth-form boy in almost every branch of useless knowledge—book knowledge *was* useless to him—but in society, and in his dealings with men and women, especially women, he had shown himself far from deficient, to say the least.

He had returned from his morning walk, and during lunch-time entertained his stepmother with a lively account of his adventure with the wood-nymph. Elise listened, deeply interested, and in particular was highly diverted by his attempts to describe the nymph's apparel.

'A sort of rifle-green coloured thing, very long,—I can't think how she ever got over the palings, —a big Bersagliere-like hat, also green, with the feathers all coming down on one side, and a chased silver pouch, or pocket, hanging by a chain from her waist.'

'It must have been Cressida,' rejoined Mrs. de Saumarez thoughtfully. 'I know the pocket; I got it for her in Paris.'

'Then Cressida's a deucedly pretty girl,' he returned, with a slight smile. When Alec's lips relaxed thus, it was unaccompanied by any sympathetic movement of the eyes or brow, and the effect was as if a stone mask smiled. 'Where may she come from? Does she live near? Can a fellow go and call?'

'Surely, Alec, you've heard me speak of her often—Miss Landon,

the girl I took with me to Switzerland last year.'

'Do you think she'd go to Switzerland with me this year, if I asked her?' said Alec, with some animation. 'I've half a mind to try. Really, this new salad is an uncommonly good mixture,' he remarked parenthetically; 'tell the cook I said so.'

'Now mind, Alec, I am not going to allow you to joke about my friend Miss Landon.' Alec drew a long, long face. 'It will be a blow for you, I fear; but let me tell you at once, and be sure you don't forget, Cressida Landon is engaged.'

'Thank God for that!' ejaculated Alec quietly, lifting his glass and sipping his Sauterne—as it were, drinking the good health of the *flancé*. 'I like engaged girls best—when married women are not to be had; they know you mean nothing by all manner of infernal fooling. There's no question of "intentions," and so on.'

'I perfectly sympathise with you,' said Elise amiably; 'but still, Alec, I won't have my little Cressida teased, and her mind unsettled, now that her affections are at last engaged. Besides, she's going to marry into a bank.'

Alec exploded with laughter.

'Marriott and Marriott,—and Alleyne it will be,' resumed Elise. 'They're worth a mint of money, you know, and as safe as the Pyramids. Think of that.'

'Confound those money-grubbing speculators,' laughed Alec gaily; 'they spoil the girl-market for family and finish.'

'Well, the *flancé*, Mr. Norbert Alleyne, is a really nice, steady, honest, sober, industrious young man' (with a stress on each adjective); 'he has been attached to her for years, and plays remarkably well upon several instruments.'

'Heard at last, I suppose, by

reason of his importunity or his organ-grinding,' said Alec. 'In every way he has got the start of me, from your account.'

'Having faithfully discharged the duties of his office as suitor for so long, it is only fair he should get promoted, is it not?' said Elise cheerfully. 'At any rate Cressida has consented, and a very good thing it is for all parties.'

'Have you seen the fellow?'

'No; he's away now for a few months before the wedding comes off in the summer.'

'What a chance!' said Alec, jestingly. 'Now I—'

'Alec,' Elise interrupted him, lifting her forefinger warningly, 'I forbid you to say anything more. I shall not allow you to meddle with Miss Landon. She has made up her mind to do a wise thing, and it would be cruel to interfere. If I feel I cannot trust you, my remedy is simple—I will not ask her here.'

'Am I so dangerous, then?' said Alec, looking up at her across the table.

Elise laughed. Yes, Alec was dangerous, like squirrels with soft fur, pretty heads, and sharp teeth. There was something of the untameable animal in him, the creature with no feelings worth mentioning to be worked upon. That prepossessing harmless-looking person of his was a gift of the freakish gods. Nothing in his lineaments or expression that told tales of his worse than frittered life. He enjoyed a happy immunity from remorse, anxiety, ambition, and care; all of which had failed to put a wrinkle on his straight white forehead or grizzle his dark hair; and the worst that dissipation could do seemed to be to impart to his countenance that slightly worn look that was rather becoming than otherwise, redeem-

ed it from effeminacy, and made him look interesting in the eyes of the London and Lullington maidens.

Elise thought all this to herself as she regarded him coolly; then shaking her head in reproof, she replied,

'Alec, you are the most fatuous man I ever had the amusement of knowing. Let me tell you that if girls knew you in the slightest degree, if they could even guess what a reprobate you are—'

'They'd be madder after you than they are already.' This was the sequel, the very reverse to what she had had in her mind when she began speaking, that rose to her lips now mockingly.

She would not come out with it; she stopped resolutely, and turned it off, saying,

'Only women are too foolish.'

But the satisfied smile on Alec's lips, as he rose from the table and lounged off to smoke in the greenhouse, showed what *he* thought.

Elise looked pensive; for an instant only. The contingency that had visited her imagination was not amusing, and she shook it off.

'Bah, what is there to fear? Cressida is not a miss in her teens fresh from school, nor even the sort of girl to be fascinated by Alec. Trust her to see through him; and what a lathe-and-plaster man it is. Still the girl has a good deal of the madcap in her, and it would be most undesirable to have it called out. On the whole, it's a very good thing that she *is* engaged.'

There is one among the burdens of life which most people feel to be heavy and a check to action, and some decline to bear in consequence, but which Elise would always take up cheerfully, nor find out its weight—responsibil-



ity. It amused her of all things to busy herself in other people's matters, and she was interested in watching the success of her experiments, as it were, from a socially scientific point of view; but the good or evil thus brought about by her influence to the people themselves were points about which she was not given to rejoicing or distressing herself.

The last twenty-four hours had for Cressida been marked by one or two incidents which, however trivial, had shaken her confidence in herself, and led her to reviewing her position more seriously than usual.

She had embarked with her eyes open, but had miscalculated her provision. She had taken, for better or worse, a certain resolution that, though with no deep root in her feelings, was to regulate her behaviour. She had had no idea how difficult this would be.

But so far from repenting that resolution, which would have been weak, she was bent upon arranging everything to tally with it.

So she began to map out and circumscribe her life, inner and outer, and to determine exactly what she would and what she would not be. Her engagement was a crisis that ought to reform and remodel everything in her. So people who would revolutionise a country in a turn of the hand think they can alter a living organism as they might alter a costume.

How did she and he stand then, face to face with each other? Norbert did not ask her to idolise him as he idolised her. But he wanted her affection—he had it, out of doubt; he wanted her regard, he had that; and he wanted her loyal faith, for ever.

He *should* have it, she swore.

She was going to keep all her

frivolous tastes in check; she would not look at Mr. Marriott's diamonds, nor spend over much time and thought upon her *trousseau*. She would study, read German and political economy with Fan, and keep aloof as much as possible for a time from general society, where the longing, springing from the power, to shine and minister to her vanity might prove too strong and run away with her.

She took to dressing perfectly plainly, like a nun, confining her ingenuity to collars and cuffs; she went much to church, read regularly with Fan, and avoided Elise de Saumarez, whose company she foresaw might be fatal to this newly-fledged character she was attempting. Only once had she been to Monks' Orchard to call formally on her friend, and happened not to find her. And her friend, for some cause or other, had not pressed her with invitations.

But at times the girl grew restless, and in the main she was profoundly dissatisfied. Was there not something hollow and unreal in all this saintship? The idea of hypocrisy revolted her more than all. Yet this world-renunciation on her part was but a spurious coquetry, this simplicity as artificial in its way as anything she had ever done.

The best company in such moods was Fan, whose natural, strong, healthy, ardent interest in general subjects Cressida admired; it rarely failed to call up her own. For she had the germs of it in her, and in rapid grasp and comprehension of any new study or idea was far ahead of her young friend. If only she could have been as free from the intrusive element of self! If once she could have sunk the preoccupying, distorting, enthralling personality of Cressida Landon!

'Fan,' she said to her quite suddenly one morning over their German, 'do you think you could ever *hate* me—hate me outright, you know ?'

Their studies were conducted for the most part out of doors. Their present and favourite retreat was under a tall spreading ash-tree behind the church, a spot screened by the building from observation from the road, and where for years Cressida had been in the habit of coming to watch the sunset on fine evenings, often with Fan for her companion, but oftener with Norbert in his holidays. The low wall where they sat commanded a superb view of an undulating sea of cornfields and green meadow-land stretching away to the distant horizon. Cressida could not always keep her eyes and her attention fixed on whatever they happened to be reading, and she would now and then perplex her fellow-student by questions seemingly *apropos* of nothing at all, like the present.

'Never!' replied Fan promptly.

'Not if I were to do something wild, odious — something that made me hate myself?'

'No, not then.'

'But why, Fan? Surely what's odious in one person must be so in another.'

'Not quite so odious. At least I might not taste it, perhaps, amongst so much that I liked.'

Cressida sighed.

'Only think, Fan, what it would be supposing the strongest bent in you be one that can lead to nothing but evil.'

Cressida had but a vague idea of what she meant, Fan a vaguer, as she replied quaintly,

'Well, even then, supposing one knew it, and there were twenty other forces pulling one in good directions, one ought to be safe.'

Cressida mused. It might be so.

But she knew what it was to feel all this goodness slipping away from her, and thought she had deserved some credit these last weeks for her exemplary behaviour in general, and her avoidance of Monks' Orchard in particular.

Late one afternoon Elise came bearing down upon the parsonage quite suddenly. She had noticed that Cressida was inclined to fight shy of her, and Elise would be the last person to persist in bestowing her society where it was not welcomed; but her visit to-day was for a purpose. She found the girl in one of her hours of depression; and though Cressida tried to force gaiety into her expression and manner, the effort was palpable to Mrs. de Saumarez, who, however, made no remark, reflecting, 'Ah, the natural reaction after the bubble of excitement. Poor thing!'

'I warn you,' she said, as she seated herself on the sofa, 'that I've come to beg. But before I do my errand, tell me how you are, child?'

'O, perfectly well,' she replied, smiling mechanically.

'I daresay,' returned Elise; 'only that was not what I meant. I'm not your medical man. I want to know how you are getting on. You must find this world very weary, "asleep or dead," with young Alleyne away,' she added semi-maliciously.

'I find it is far worse even than I expected,' Cressida exclaimed, with a double meaning Elise could not entirely catch.

'But is it really of any use to shut yourself up, as I hear you have been doing lately?' she suggested.

'I'm very much afraid it is not,' returned Cressida, laughing constrainedly.

*Double entendre*, again. 'You are not happy,' said Elise, surveying her with an exploring eye.

'O, not in the least,' Cressida acknowledged.

'Did you think you would be?' asked the older lady, an ironical smile playing round the corners of her mouth.

'When then,' said the girl, 'if not now?'

'Cressida, that is a sentimental speech that sounds oddly on your lips. The truth is, you want a good lecture.'

Cressida shut her eyes and smiled wilfully.

'Yes, I know; on the folly, first of having romantic hallucinations, and then of insisting on verifying them in real life;—on the fact that love and marriage have been glorified into a pseudo-importance for the special benefit of poets and novel-writers; but that we live in a positive age, and so on.'

'But instead of delivering it,' resumed Elise unheedingly, 'I am going to carry you home with me to dine; that is, if you'll have so much mercy on me.'

'To dine?'

'Yes; I want a lady. Mrs. Alleyne has failed; but the others are coming—the Colonel and a daughter. I asked the family, who have been very civil to me, and I wanted somebody to meet Joe Kennedy, who is down with us for a few days. By the way, I like that man; he is so cheerful. I think all cheerful people deserve to be decorated. You will come. What in the world can I find to say to a Miss Alleyne? You mustn't say no. I've seen next to nothing of you since I came,' she observed, in mild reproach.

Cressida had a faint wish to go, and felt, moreover, too indolent to refuse.

'Will you go and dress, then?' said Mrs. de Saumarez, taking up a book; 'and I shall wait and take you back with me in the carriage.'

Cressida went. In strict accordance with her newly-formed principles, she discarded all her evening toilettes of many colours, and presently reappeared dressed entirely in black. Elise surveyed her critically, but nodded approval.

'It is curious,' she said, 'how much better that colour becomes you than any other. But a touch of life we must have.'

There was a glass tray on the table filled with wild apple-blossom. Elise picked out the choicest sprigs of delicate pink-and-white flowers, which she proceeded to arrange effectively about the girl's hair and dress, Cressida remonstrating faintly.

'Come, my dear,' said Elise, in amazement; 'you talk as if, instead of going to be married, you were going to take the veil.'

'I feel as if I were,' said Cressida frankly.

But the slight change of scene had its favourable effect upon her. During the drive Elise soothingly turned the conversation on to other things. That evening Cressida felt more herself than she had done for days. The little dinner-party was pleasant. The Tsar appeared, accompanied by Fan; her elders being all disabled by influenza, she had to submit to put herself into evening dress and be taken out by her father, feeling, she remarked privately, like a monkey with its master going to a show. Elise was an admirable hostess; Joe, genial all round, as usual. Alec talked little, contenting himself chiefly with looking uncommonly well at the head of the table. There was a general exhilaration at work that told increasingly upon Cressida. She felt satisfied with herself, delighted to find how brilliant she still could be.

'I used to think that places,

like people, had a native individuality; that once a dull house meant always a dull house, and that there was a kind of dreariness that stuck fast. I've changed my mind to-night.'

Dinner was over, and the ladies were together in the drawing-room. There was ample cause for Cressida's change of mind. Monks' Orchard had been startled into a new sort of life, of which the leading idea was, amusement at any price. An indescribable atmosphere of ease and pleasantness pervaded the rooms. Luxury was everywhere and without display; how different from the ill-digested grandeur of the Marriotts' 'residence'!—home was a wrong word for a medium where the inmates looked as curiously out of place as flies in amber. Mrs. de Saumarez might have lived all her life instead of six weeks at Monks' Orchard, so thoroughly comfortable did she make herself and her friends under that roof. Sans Souci should have been the name written over the gates; *Laissez faire, laissez aller*, the motto inscribed on each door as a cue to the guests. A pleasing sense of expansion spread over everybody; even Fan, though she looked askance at Elise, whom she instinctively distrusted, noting approvingly the preponderance of the ornamental over the useful in her surroundings, especially the stepson, who, so far as Fan's observation went, did nothing but twirl his moustache.

Elise laughed. 'It seems the Kennedys make themselves scarce; and an uninhabited house is always dreary.'

'Not so dreary as an inhabited, sometimes,' said Fan definitively.

'Well, I desire nothing better than to exorcise blue devils in general, and to "lay" the very shadows of dull men and women

that may haunt the place whilst I am here,' said Mrs. de Saumarez; 'but you young people must aid and abet me. The neighbourhood has been extremely kind in lavishing invitations upon us, and no one can complain of my not accepting their civilities if I return them properly. What sort of entertainment would be most acceptable, I wonder?'

'Something that would bring together the greatest number of the young men and young ladies, and with as few chaperons as possible,' retorted Fan promptly, but in a tone of inimitable scorn.

Elise looked at her curiously; examining her, thought Fan, just as if she were a youthful gorilla, or some other newly-invented animal.

'Why?' she asked mildly.

'Because Lullington is still in the superstitious stage; believing in the three-volume-novel philosophy that teaches that the aim of life is to fall in love in the first place, and that everything ought only to be looked at and cared for, so far as it may somehow have something to do with that and matrimony.'

'You don't think so, then?' asked Elise, amused.

'Do you?' said Fan, thinking it superfluous to answer for herself.

Elise laughed and shrugged her shoulders. 'Not precisely,' she replied moderately. But the aim of life in her private philosophy was to amuse oneself, and she had strong doubts, founded on experience, as to the unmixt tendencies of marriage towards promoting that end.

'Indeed,' objected Cressida, 'I think Lullington is not so far wrong in its own case, at least as regards the women. Look at the six Miss Churchwards; is it likely that they will do anything in their six lives more important to themselves and mankind at

large than marry? Did their mother ever do anything more important than marry—their father?

'Ah,' said Elise smoothly, 'of course it is to be expected that just now *you* should look to it as all in all.'

She spoke playfully; but, cat-like, had scratched in her sport. Cressida winced a little under a taunting inner reminder that she had often looked on to a foreign tour, an interesting visit, nay, even a fancy ball, with a great deal more active interest than for the life of her she could now think of her approaching marriage.

'And quite right too,' concluded Elise approvingly. 'So Miss Alleyne is strong-minded and stands up for single blessedness; Cressida for wedded life, as becomes her; and I, having reached the quiet vantage-ground of widowhood, look down philosophically on you both.'

'I hate this woman,' said Fan to herself; 'she's sly. Pretends to be serious, to draw us out, and then makes game of our earnest. Brute, I shall hold my tongue!' and she relapsed into silence accordingly.

When the gentlemen joined them presently, the Tsar took the seat by Elise. She could be most things to most men, and made him a particularly apt companion. It was impossible to quarrel with her—unless she wished it—on any subject under heaven. She would let her cavalier be as dictatorial as he chose; he would never hurt her feelings, or shock her principles, or even discover what they were. What burning subjects can exist for those who regard life as a farce! Politics interested her—like clever tricks with cards. Poetry, to her, was the raving in time and in tune of happy lunatics. She read

every book that came in her way, impartially, with previous intent to make fun of it, and preferred silly publications and weak novels, as affording more food for ridicule. Her ideal of life would be to turn it into a series of amusing anecdotes. She had an inkling of the Greywell potentate's irascibility, and knew how, like Scheherazade, to avert all that was unpleasant or hazardous from his mind by a string of trivial, entertaining table-talk.

Alec, to Fan's annoyance, came up to her and spent some time in teasing her. It amused him to try and make her say rude things, and in the experiment he succeeded beyond his expectations. Fan was longing for him to go away. The photograph book would be better company than this Ineffable, with a face like one of the better-looking Roman emperors, who talked nonsense, and treated her, besides, as if she was a little girl.

He considered her as such, though a very singular specimen, and continued his *persiflage* in spite of rebuffs. At last, she simply got up and marched off into a glass verandah, which opened out of the smaller of the two divisions of which the room consisted, thinking he *must* take the hint.

Cressida had just strayed in there to look round at the flowers, which were superb. Joe was with her. Presently Fan, to her dismay, perceived that her tormenter was following her to where she had taken refuge. Bent on escaping him somehow, she suddenly pounced upon Kennedy, begging him to come and show and explain to her a set of American views he had brought down, and which she had caught sight of in the next room. Joe good-humouredly suffered himself to be carried off, and Fan saw Alec

laughing at her under his moustache.

Meanwhile, Cressida, unconscious of these innocent manoeuvres, was flitting along the verandah. She had a kind of affinity with exotic flowers, a fondness for them, and lingered among the brilliant azaleas, spreading ferns, and orchids with which the place was crammed.

Alec, standing at the opposite end, was looking down at her across a foreground that was a blaze of pink in flower. She became conscious of it quickly; his manner of looking disconcerted her more than a hard downright stare would have done. His light glance had something pointed in it, and fell like a volley of invisible shafts, striking home, and with a certain significance, where he chose.

Cressida instinctively turned her head away, and bent down to examine a magnificent purple-and-white lily, whose fragrance, almost too strong in its sweetness, scented the whole air around.

Alec made his way carelessly along the greenhouse towards her.

'I wish I could tell,' he began, when he was close beside her, 'where I had seen your face before.'

'What!' said Cressida, smiling, but without looking up; 'have you forgotten our encounter in the woods?'

'Is it likely now?' said Alec, with emphasis.

'Then I suppose I am to understand that you took me for an old acquaintance that first morning, already?'

'Your face, certainly, did not seem strange to me, even then.'

Cressida shook her head disapprovingly, and replied, keeping her face averted,

'That is very dreadful to hear. It makes me feel that there are a good many me's abroad in the

world—different editions of myself, and better ones, perhaps: who knows? I'm only a type then, and I hate that.' Suddenly raising her face to his, she added, 'I should like to be unique.'

'I should say that you are,' returned Alec quietly; 'and that must account for my impression, I suppose.'

'How puzzling you are!' laughed Cressida. 'There's only one alternative left: you and I must have met in some previous life—in the world of spirits.'

'World of spirits—what's that?' said Alec vaguely, tampering with the leaves of a maiden-hair fern that grew next to the lily. 'Do you believe in ghosts and spirits, and those things? Of course you do. All ladies are superstitious.'

'Are they?'

'All young ladies. They may say what they like, there isn't one but she believes that nonsense in her heart.'

'I should like to prove you wrong,' said Cressida archly; but wondering aside to herself why she was prolonging this slightly silly-sounding duologue.

'You couldn't,' said Alec confidently. 'Any fair test that was proposed, you'd refuse.'

'Not I.'

'Or you'd accept it, and your courage would fail when it was put to the proof.'

'Not mine; willfully.'

'Well, for instance, you know, of course, that the park here is haunted; that a Mrs. Kennedy's ghost "walks" by the Obelisk every night.'

'I believe I've heard some nursery stories to that effect.'

'Very good; but for all that I'll engage that not you, nor any young lady I know, would dare to cross the park alone after dark, and pass the Obelisk, through all those black firs, where the owls



are hooting and the bats and death's-head moths flying about.'

Cressida hesitated and laughed.

'There; I told you that you'd refuse any ordeal that was proposed,' said Alec. 'Next time you'll believe me.'

'Come,' said Cressida carelessly, 'you don't mean to say that you think I should be *afraid*?'

'Upon my honour, I know you would.'

'Then you must think you know me better than I know myself.'

'It would be rude for me to say that. But I'll wager anything you like—I'll wager that lily, to which you seem to have taken a fancy—it's mine; I brought the root from India—that you never walk to the Obelisk and back, after dark, and alone.'

'And if ever I did,' said Cressida jestingly, 'would you believe me when I told you the next day, and grant that your wager was lost?'

Pause. Then Alec replied in the same tone,

'O, you might leave your card there. I shall look carefully every morning; when I find it, I shall know who has been.'

'And then?'

'Then you will have won, and I shall have to confess that I did not know you before,' he said deliberately. 'What, are you going now?' for she was moving away.

'Yes, the scent of your Indian lily is very sweet, but rather overpowering,' said Cressida; 'it makes me quite giddy;' and she glided off to join Fan and Joe Kennedy, and look over the photographs with them. Alec did not follow her, but sauntered into the next room to make a third with Elise and the Tsar. As Cressida automatically took one after another of the photographs into her hand, her mind was as far off as the countries themselves.

'Well,' said Alec to his step-mother, when their guests were gone, and before he went to join Joe, who was smoking in the garden, 'have I been on my good behaviour, or not? Have I done my duty as a host should? Have I flirted with Miss Landon?'

'You've behaved very well indeed,' said Elise complacently; 'alarmingly well, I may say. After such an exemplary beginning, Alec, I feel as if a falling off must come; so pray be doubly on your guard.'

It was il Penseroso that Elise had carried off with her to Monks' Orchard. It was l'Allegro who, on returning to the parsonage, put a laughing head into Mr. Landon's study and wished him good-night. He asked anxiously if she had enjoyed her evening. Cressida said 'Yes,' ambiguously, as you say 'Yes' when you have enjoyed yourself immoderately, and can give no good reason why.

## CHAPTER IX.

### TO BE, OR NOT TO BE.

'PRAY what manner of man is this young De Saumarez?' asked Mr. Landon mildly of Cressida, as they sat at breakfast, and she was reporting the party in detail to her father with her usual light and amusing touches. 'I don't hear very favourable rumours of him and his antecedents. But Lullington is a wasp's nest; the fountain-head of all that is most ill-natured in the way of gossip.'

'O, I daresay he deserves all that people can find to say about him,' said Cressida, pulling her roll to pieces viciously, and addressing herself to slaughter Alec without remorse. 'To begin with, he is rather nice-looking, and that has spoiled him. Papa, do you think there ever was a man who could be good-looking in the first place,

and *not* good for nothing in the second?

'Well, my dear, there's Joe Kennedy, a fine young fellow enough, yet hard-working too. Not even you could call him a useless member of society.'

'No, no, papa, you won't understand,' said Cressida despairingly. 'Mr. de Saumarez is not worth Joe's little finger. Nobody could call him fine-looking either; but he is pretty. And men like Joe never are vain, but this sort always.'

'Ah, he's a conceited fellow then, besides?'

'Worse than that,' said Cressida, who felt as if she owed Norbert a peace-offering, and was somehow making it by her persistent disparagement of Alec, which was spoken in perfect sincerity, and gratified her moreover as an innocent revenge for the undercurrent of flirtation into which he had been pleased to draw her. 'He is empty-headed, and gives himself airs, I fancy.'

'No acquisition to the place, evidently,' quoth the parson regretfully. 'I had hoped you might have had some pleasant society there during the spring.'

'O, I hope that still,' replied Cressida. 'We aren't accustomed to look for anything very good to come out of Monks' Orchard. I, for one, shall be thankful for the smallest mercies in the way of amusements; and whatever these people do will at least not be tame or commonplace. They will have sets of friends down from London to stay, and give dances and picnics, and so on—enough just to keep us alive—till the summer;' and she sighed involuntarily, with a glance at Norbert's letter, which lay by her plate unopened.

Mr. Landon smiled complacently.

'Too precious, too sacred to be discussed in the presence of an eye-witness,' he thought; and when, breakfast over, he went forth to his parish work, he smiled again as he saw his daughter walk out into the garden with her letter in her hand, taking it to read among the flowers.

It was a fresh April morning, woods and meads bright with the inimitable green of fresh-born foliage, the birds singing with a kind of fury, the air full of the intoxicating quintessence of spring. It worked upon Cressida as she sauntered along, quickening, as it were, the sense of life, and making her feel everything doubly. Forgetting her letter, which she still held absently in her hand, she let her thoughts go free, and walked on, like a *somnambule*, stooping now and then to smell or pluck a flower in an aimless, absent way.

The forget-me-nots here were scentless, unlike the Alpine ones, but the perfume of a plant of wild thyme, with a sharp swift association, sent her thoughts shooting off to Switzerland.

'Soon it will be spring on the Weissberg.'

The impression, vivid as though the scene were before her, came back on her of a certain sunrise, and Stephen Halliday, and his botany lecture that ran so wild. In her preoccupation she let fall her letter from her hand.

This roused her. 'I do believe I'm growing sentimental,' she said, trying to laugh; and seating herself with an air of resolution on a bench that encircled the stem of a hawthorn-tree, she began to read. There was a slight, painful contraction on her brow, which deepened and deepened.

Presently, with a heavy sigh, she let her fingers close over the paper, and sat thinking, or rather

listening, to herself; for Cressida, with all her contradictions, had a kind of outside judgment that was always the same, a demon that came to commune with her, and was apt to speak the truth.

Norbert's letter was not a love-letter, as the word goes. But Cressida knew him well enough to read between the lines. The astonishingly high spirits, the humour, the elasticity, the expansion that broke through; she could not shut her eyes to the surprising change, nor to where the cause of it lay. At the end there was a jesting, half-mischievous message from Lefroy.

Cressida passed a bad half-hour with her demon, who would gloss over nothing, but insisted on laying bare her relations to her affianced lover, without sparing her feelings in the smallest degree.

'When you said, "My lot is yours," you knew how it would be, knew what it meant to him. And now when it has come to pass, and you see it, and how a fresh life has begun for him, you pretend to yourself to be taken by surprise.'

How miserably his feeling, in its singleness and generosity, seemed to dwarf her own sentiment towards him, by contrast! It showed up her own poor motives in a more unflattering light than had been thrown on them yet.

'You consented, because you were impatient to be launched in a brilliant sphere, and the opportunity was tempting. Half your nature—not the best half—is unknown to him. Why, if he could see into it, he would hate you, hate you!'

'Yes' had been easily spoken; and at first, and so long as the whole matter could be treated theoretically, she could still persist in beholding there a wise,

may a fair, agreement. But lately everything that made the coming event more and more of a reality to her seemed to estrange her more and more from it and from him, till she was getting to regard the future with a feeling simply of dread. By what fatal misreckoning on her part had it come about? She, Cressida, the most clinging of mortals, had, in an evil hour, given her hand to a man who never had had, and never would have, the faintest hold over her inclinations.

She saw herself worse than she was. For in that evil hour she had not gone so far as to recognise the fact that she meant to marry him, and let her heart have its serious passions apart. It now seemed to her as though she must have said this to herself in so many words. Keenly alive to the nature and extent of Norbert's love, she felt too late she owed it respect and something more. Though perhaps incapable of such self-absorbing ideal devotion herself, it seemed to her like sacrilege to have accepted it on the terms she would have to give; and here she must go on deceiving, or disappointing by undeceiving him—shameful alternatives, both.

What then? Break it off. For the first time she looked at the idea, but only to start away from it. It would be such an awful confession of weakness; the main step was more formidable than any she had ever yet had to face; and then the details, so odious, so mortifying. And there was a kind of tenderness, too, for this lad, who had revolutionised his life for her, and whom she had allowed, led on, so to do.

One thing was certain—that meditations like these confused and half-maddened her. Perhaps all this was but a wild passing

mood. She had engaged herself calmly and advisedly; a few months hence it would be irrevocable. In the mean time it might be better to avoid thought, shut her eyes, and drown regret, presentiment, and above all reminiscence.

The sight of a manly figure coming along the walk in her direction gave her a nervous thrill. It was an unutterable relief to see it was Joe, only Joe, dear old fellow!

'The servant said you were out here,' he began apologetically, 'and so I, very unceremoniously—'

'O, that was right,' said Cressida. 'I am so glad to see you.'

'Why?' he asked naively.

'O, because we got no talk last night,' she replied.

'I called,' he said, 'to wish you good-bye. I had to come early, for I've just got-a letter that obliges me to leave Monks' Orchard at once.'

'Going!' she said, surprised, and in a tone of disappointment.

'Tom is down with typhoid fever. His wife sends me word that he is worse, and as usual they are at sixes and sevens. I'm going to see if I can straighten things for them a bit.'

'How provoking!' sighed Cressida. Really it seemed as if Tom's fever had come on purpose to vex her. Tom had been sent into the world to vex people. As to his illness, it was probably a false alarm, so far as danger was concerned. He was not going to die. Good-for-nothing people are never in a hurry to leave the world to make room for their betters. Tom Kennedy would be sure to pull through anything. It would be Joe who would have the fever and die.

'Only don't catch it yourself,' she said, with a forced smile.

He smiled back, saying coolly,

'O, I've got fewer to miss me, than he;' for Joe was pretty well hardened to possibilities. Besides, he regarded his life as a loan, the interest on which duty, when it called, would always find him ready to put at the disposal of other people; and as to the principal, that might any day be reclaimed.

There was a little natural bitterness in his tone, but none in the frank, patient look that met her.

'I wish I were as good as you,' she exclaimed vehemently.

He laughed. 'What on earth are you talking about? Why, it is we men who have to look up to you women for notions of goodness.'

'Some men to some women perhaps; but take ourselves for instance. How valuable you are in the world, and I, what a useless person!'

'You women never know,' said he, 'how and when your influence tells on us.' He wanted to explain to her how his mere acquaintance with her had done him good, as it had, in many softening and refining ways, but he could not find the right words. 'Do you suppose,' he asked presently, 'that a fellow like me can know you and not be the better man for it?'

'Then you don't think me an utterly worthless and contemptible creature?' she said wistfully.

His look answered her. It was grave and sad. For his mind misgave him that her engagement was not leading her on in that path of roses which outsiders took for granted. Had he not known as much from the first? But neither advice nor open sympathy could Joe Kennedy offer Cressida Landon in this emergency. Yet his mere silent presence calmed her a little. It was always so.

There was an out-going strength and steadiness that seemed to emanate from his straightforward character and buoyed up the weak and irresolute; in their intercourse with him they were not so utterly unregenerate.

After a pause he began bluntly, 'When I may see you again I don't know now, this business may tie me down for another month, and my leave's up in August; but—'

Cressida cut him short, exclaiming,

'Promise me that whatever you hear of me you won't despise me utterly, that you won't think very badly of me until, at least, you know from me how far I'm to blame for anything that may happen.'

'I promise,' he said, rather taken aback by the appeal, though it merely confirmed his previous apprehensions, and he thought he understood perfectly what it meant. It was more than Cressida herself did. She had spoken on a wild unaccountable impulse of the moment.

It was a singular parting. No good-bye was spoken. They shook hands, as allies might after making their covenant; then Joe walked away, thinking gloomily,

'Poor, poor girl! Is she actually beginning to feel that she has made an utter mistake? To say to himself that it *was* a mistake was one thing; to find her realising it vividly was another. He pitied her profoundly, and did not blame her at all. She had been 'led into it,' he supposed. There was nothing he could do.

Well, he would not think about it more than he could help. It was Joe's habit and nature to go ahead, and not perplex his brain with what was beside his path. At present his business in hand was to mitigate his wretched

cousin's plight, as pitiable in its way as Cressida's, and more pressing.

Everything and everybody seemed to Cressida to have conspired against her that day to drive her frantic. The afternoon was chiefly spent in receiving visitors, Lullington acquaintances, of which there came a string with intent to congratulate: friends anxious to know if the day was fixed, girls inquisitive about the trousseau, all commiserating her exceedingly upon the enforced absence of Mr. Alleyne, to which sad deprivation they laid the dispiritedness which appeared beneath her strenuous attempts at gaiety. The exertion was as severe as that of an actress throughout a heavy protracted play, and left her with all her nerves vibrating, her frame at once over-tired and strung up to unnatural perturbation. Everything jarred upon her: the servants coming for orders, the village people calling at the house for this and for that; and finally she had to listen to a mild but long rignmarole of rebuke from her father for having forgotten to send or take down a basket of wine and jellies which had been ordered for the sick woman at the Monks' Orchard lodge. It was late now, and the servants were busy, and the invalid would be disappointed, have to wait, and so forth.

It was partly with the desire of escaping from the scene of these worries that Cressida after dinner offered to take down the basket to the lodge herself. Mr. Landon looked surprised at her volunteering, but thought it so good of her that he did not like to discourage such a sign of grace. He merely asked if it was not rather late. O no, said Cressida, it was light still; she would be back in half an hour. He thanked her for the offer as for a favour, and Cressida

started off leisurely across the meadows in the spring twilight, soon reaching the lodge.

She was always gentle and sympathetic in the sick-room, and her visits were apt to be valued above those of more regularly benevolent and useful people. Feeling herself welcome she stayed some while, thinking that really with all her faults she made a very good nurse or ministering angel when required.

It was true. Her mother during her last illness could not bear to have any one but Cressida near her. As for the rheumatic old dame with only a small child to keep her company, this treasure of a visitor came as a godsend; she was only too thankful to detain her, and it was dark and approaching nine o'clock when Cressida left the lodge.

Again she lingered outside at the gate, close by the entrance to the Monks' Orchard woods. How black they looked to-night, how ghostly! Ha, now would be the very time to go and win her mock wager, to cross the wood and leave her card on the Obelisk fearlessly; and Alec coming to-morrow would be confounded quite.

It struck her as rather a tempting freak. Unconsciously she was longing, seeking, after the fret and uneasiness of the day, for some distraction. It was wonderfully easy, almost refreshing, to throw herself into a little folly of this kind, the more *bizarre* the better.

The moment was a capital one. She was constitutionally timid; but nervousness seemed to have taken leave of her to-night, expelled in fact by the restless activity of a slightly overstrained system. She went on a step or two, then hesitated. Supposing she were to be met or seen tramping alone through the woods after

dark. It would have something beyond an odd appearance. But whom should she meet? It was too late for any one but a poacher, and she said to herself that to her certain knowledge Alec took care to keep such at a safe distance from his boundaries. Besides, it was not really so very late—nine o'clock. A quarter of an hour's walk would bring her to the Obelisk.

Something irresistible seemed to push her on; her wayward reluctance to go back to her wedding-presents and bridal cogitations at the parsonage was quite enough, if it was not all.

She started off heedlessly along the narrow, mossy woodland path, for the first few moments enjoying the dusky walk and the adventurous feeling prodigiously. The sky was slightly overcast, but the moon must have been out behind, for there was light enough, except in the thickest parts of the wood. She knew the ways and byways of the park by heart, having so often explored them with Norbert and Fan that she could have got along blindfold. Her light foot-tread and the *frou-frou* of her sweeping gown hardly scared the night-roamers, such as they were. Rabbits started now and then in the fern; a bird, crouched in its nest among the blue wild hyacinths, fluttered off at her approach, and the rustle made her shrink; but all her starts and tremors were, she decided, purely material, and might be reduced to a not unreasonable dread of a strange dog, or a robber, or, what would be far worse, a keeper. It would be horrid to be seen, she felt; and this fear presently became tremendous, though not before she had got on too far to retreat with dignity. Then the whole expedition began to strike her as rather childish; but underneath there was still that obstin-



ate, desperate quest of amusement impelling her on. Besides, the Obelisk was nearly in sight. Only two minutes more and she has won.

She hurried on to get it over. The tall spruce-firs and larches bordering the path here cast grim and ominous shadows. Then came the break in the woods, the spreading cedar,—and the gleaming monolith was there before her. A real, nervous agitation began to gain on her now, but it would have been ridiculous to waver when within reach of the goal. She recovered herself with an effort, walked deliberately up the bank to the Obelisk, and taking a card from her purse, inserted it deftly between the joints of the marble at the basement. It would never be noticed, such a mere scrap of paper, except by an eye on the look out for it.

Then she paused, went a step or two backwards, laughing to herself at the freak, and stood still for a moment triumphantly, as if to dare the ghost of the defunct Mrs. Kennedy to stand forth.

The next instant she barely repressed a shriek. A tall dark figure was emerging from a group of trees opposite—a man: she was seen—discovered. In her panic she could have turned and flown headlong, but that impulse she resisted. Almost simultaneously she had recognised him—Alec, lifting his cap to her as he approached. There was a look of triumph on *his* face too. It gave Cressida a momentary chill, but she stood her ground with seeming composure, and met his glance victoriously.

‘Confess yourself mistaken for once,’ she said.

‘I’ve lost, no doubt of it,’ he returned. ‘For once I would rather not have won. But I hardly dared hope you would prove me wrong, you know.’

Whilst they were speaking, Cressida’s mind went through a whole train of rapid reflections. Alec then had come hoping, if not expecting, to meet her there; and something in his face convinced her of *his* impression that she also had come as to a rendezvous.

Worse. Had not there been the ghost of an idea of the sort underneath?

Be that as it may, the thing is done; she must not make matters worse by seeming confused now; she must take it naturally, make a stand, laugh it all off as a joke. It should have been easy. But there seemed a kind of cold spell upon her. She had felt the same, she remembered, last night when they were talking in the verandah.

‘Now you have come,’ said he, ‘I shall at least have the pleasure of escorting you home.’

‘O, no,’ said Cressida; ‘indeed that is not necessary. I assure you I am not afraid. I would rather go alone, and give you the crowning proof of my courage.’

She felt the tone of her remonstrance rather faint. Alec did not dream of regarding it, knowing himself very well to be master of the situation. He merely smiled and persisted, and she said to herself it was no use declining. Light expostulation and serious entreaty would be equally wasted on this Harry Madcap. If she hung back and objected, it would merely prolong their interview; whenever she went, he would go too. It was only natural that, thinking what he thought, he should doubt the sincerity of her reluctance; she certainly did not see her way to convincing him at present; so, without saying more, she began to retrace her steps, submitting to his companionship and protection. It was an adventure, an eccentric one, yet not wholly uncongenial

after the terrible tedium and discords of that afternoon. But she feared Alec would attribute the incident simply and solely to his superior powers of fascination. No doubt they had had their hand in it.

The walk seemed much longer this time. After the first few minutes Cressida's slight flurry abated. Alec's manner was serenity itself, and helped to tranquillise her and put her at ease.

Only he would keep stopping her every now and then. This time it was to point out to her the glowworms in the grass; this time to look at a fairy ring of fungi, or a large moth clinging to the stem of a tree.

'So you really were not frightened as you came all along these dark byways by yourself?' said he, as they brushed through the coppice by the narrow thread of path that just permitted of their keeping side by side.

'No,' said Cressida; 'except that I feared I might be taken again for a poacher, and shot this time in downright earnest. But as for those ghostly terrors you declare all ladies are subject to, they were far from me.'

'Yet you were as white as a sheet when I came out and met you.'

'You frightened me,' said Cressida. 'But you are not a ghost exactly.'

He laughed. 'Not exactly. Hark! stop a moment. Did you hear that? Wasn't it a what do you call it—nightingale?'

And they stood still, listening in silence, Cressida quite forgetting that it was too early in the year for a 'what do you call it—nightingale'?

At this rate they did not get over the ground very quickly.

'Do let us make haste,' she urged presently, in earnest.

'What a tremendous hurry you

are in!' said Alec. 'Well, what do you say to our turning off and trying this path? It looks like a short cut.'

'Thanks,' said Cressida; 'but let me tell you it leads back into the woods again; so don't judge by appearances.'

'Are you bent on getting rid of me as soon as you possibly can?' was his next question.

'Bent upon it,' said Cressida, smiling.

She spoke thoughtlessly, but the coquetting accent was not a little maddening to Alec, who was much more powerfully taken by the subtle charm of her look and manner than either of them realised. A shade more abandon on her part, a shade less discrimination on his, and he would have probably said or done something that would have made Cressida hate him. Fortunately, or unfortunately, he silenced himself.

'You ought to remember,' he said, half bantering, 'that this walk with you may be all I shall have to look back upon perhaps—in a few months, when you are married.'

'When I am married!' repeated Cressida mechanically, her heart beginning to beat oddly. The words sounded in her ears like unreal mockery.

'Yes,' said Alec, with a perfect semblance of innocence, and looking up inquiringly. 'Is it a secret? Ought I not to mention it?'

Cressida laughed ironically.

'O, anything but a secret.'

'A sacred subject, then,' he said, with mock solemnity, 'that oughtn't to pass profane lips like mine.'

'Well,' said Cressida, with the bitter flippancy of a sadness which finds no other vent, 'don't you think matrimony, like death to the Greeks and Romans, is a subject too dreadful and dismal to be

alluded to in a direct fashion, or in general conversation?

Alec laughed immoderately. 'Is that what you think? Of course I see that the subject of your marriage might easily be a very dismal one for some people. But to you,' insinuatingly, 'do you mean to say—'

'O, I mean,' interrupted Cressida, 'that as death kills our outward selves, so marriage may kill our souls.'

'You are getting too deep for me,' said Alec; and Cressida would herself have been puzzled to account for her last speech, or the feeling that prompted it. 'Now my stepmother is always bothering me to marry. It would be the saving of me, she says. Why, she began about an heiress this very morning, and even offered to propose for me herself.'

'And didn't you accept?' asked Cressida, roguishness getting the upper hand in her again.

'I really forget at this moment what I did say,' returned Alec thoughtfully. 'Of course it was a strong temptation to hold out. Fancy having all the trouble taken off one's hands, like that!'

'Are you so very much at a loss for words, then?' returned Cressida lightly. 'I should never have guessed it, you know.'

'O, generally speaking, in society and so on, I—I find as much as I care to say. But imagine having to make such a declaration as that in proper form. What on earth should one say? Tell me, now, how ought I to begin?'

'I really have no idea,' said Cressida, involuntarily quickening her pace.

'Stop, stop!' said Alec. 'You are tearing your dress, dragging a long bramble after you. Wait! As he proceeded very leisurely to disentangle the spray, he resumed, 'Let me see. I might start thus,

with a look, and begin, "Since first I saw your face—"

'That's a quotation,' interrupted Cressida; 'you ought to be original.'

'O, I must be original, must I? Then I should skip the preliminaries, and begin, "My love,—"

'No, that would never do,' Cressida objected, laughing and shaking her head; 'you shouldn't begin with that,—the prettiest thing,—because you can never beat it, never get beyond.'

'Couldn't I?' he rejoined, sinking his voice to a whisper, bending down, and speaking close in her ear, with a sudden emphasis that startled her. 'I should say, Cressida—'

She shrank away and tried to look at him indignantly and defiantly, but still checked by a cross-feeling of amusement.

Alec caught himself up, and concluded unabashed, in a cool, half-laughing, half-entreating tone, 'If only that were her name—which I forget.'

Cressida had recovered her self-possession in a second, and returned quite quietly, though in an altered distant voice,

'Ah, I think you could manage it all perfectly well without rehearsal.'

They had just emerged from the woods at about a hundred yards from the lodge. Here she stopped for a moment, look and gesture enjoining Alec not to persist in accompanying her further. Glancing back, when she had reached the gate, she saw he had obeyed, and was standing there among the trees where they had parted, in the same attitude as when she had first caught sight of him under the firs by the Obelisk, and no doubt with the same characteristic smile on his face.

When, ten minutes later, Cressida, breathless, reëntered the par-

sonage, Mr. Landon looked up from his books meekly, and inquired,

'Have you only just returned? It is very late, surely?'

'I stayed longer at the lodge than I meant, and after that did not come in directly,' she answered.

He was too short-sighted to perceive her changing colour. 'There is a telegram for you. Have you seen it?'

It was from Norbert, announcing, she explained, a speedy unexpected visit two days hence.

A pleasant surprise, that quite accounted to her father for her momentary flurry and confusion of mind. She shrank instinctively from his observation though, and went to the window, looking out into the dark vacantly. Quiet came to her by and by, of the desperate sort of a losing gambler who goes on doubling his stake. The luck may change.

## CHAPTER X.

### STILL WATERS.

OF all bores, the society of your intimate friend in love is surely the most crushing. The attention he vouchsafes to spare you—you, his *alter ego*—by fits and starts, is extremely hazy. His eyes go rambling about as you hold forth to him on subjects of momentous importance to yourself, and that he would have regarded as matters of life and death but the other day, yet nothing could be more ludicrous and feeble than his attempts to simulate interest and listening; whilst broadly expressing by his manner that his thoughts are better employed, and that if his wishes were law, you would be at Jericho.

Such was Lewis Lefroy's philosophy. It struck him therefore

as a rather extraordinary circumstance that he should have found his friend, Norbert Alleyne, these last three months ten times as responsive and companionable as before. But nothing under heaven was allowed to remain a mystery to Lefroy for long, and this particular riddle he solved to his satisfaction by reflecting that young England was growing less and less apt to make itself the plaything of sentiment, and that Norbert was in fact an extreme instance of the positive tendencies of his generation, since so much method had found its way into the madness of even this exclusive passion as to curtail its distracting influence in all the matters of every-day life.

So far beyond the range of Lefroy's lilliputian conceptions was the true action of a king thought overruling all, and for the best. Why, it was the very excess of this single feeling that, by its absolute mastery and spread, had suddenly brought unity and order into Norbert's anarchical life, transforming the face of things, making a crooked world straight, turning stumbling blocks into stepping stones, ignes fatui into safety-lamps for him, with that redeeming power for peace which a mighty force, everywhere preponderant, can exercise. No wonder he became a more lively and inspiring comrade. But of this way of love Lewis Lefroy had no more personal knowledge than of life in the planet Jupiter, and about as much chance of ever obtaining it. It is true he might and did pride himself on an almost feminine susceptibility, but his minute emotions could only do the work of pigmies upon him. His thoughts and affections had all run, to breadth without depth, which had enabled him easily to earn a reputation for liberal ideas and universal sympathies. The rapidity

of any new growth in his head and heart was a simple consequence of its light root. Thus he could cut connection with his past, nor bear away a scar or wrinkle in token of too precious or painful by-gones, and improvise a future without regrets or fears, or any of those mental struggles and wrenches that leave their mark on a man. Elastic he was as india-rubber; his soul was always seeking further experiences, yet remaining throughout pretty impermeable underneath. Norbert's Horatio, Fan had dubbed him. And so far Lewis Lefroy was indeed a good modern representative of those who can suffer all—hopeless passions, docked ambitions, bereavements, remorse, jealousies,—and yet be 'as one that suffers nothing,' but go through the world enjoying it, *dilettante* fashion; a cautious *régime*, that reduces life's sorrows certainly, but also its joys, to a minimum of intensity. He would have smiled superciliously, however, and thought himself injured or misunderstood had you hinted to him that he was incapable of a master passion. Was he not downright lawless in some of his ideas? He never hesitated to broach the most startling principles or to face the most romantic and perilous situations. He rather liked it. In sooth they were fraught with small danger to him, the minnow! How should he know, except by name, the merciless tenacity of a fixed idea that enters into a man, as has been said, like a screw, to which every year gives another turn, making the rooting up of it—first, a painful, then an excruciating, lastly a fatal, operation.

Such an enormous influence was at present bearing on his young friend's development in a proportionate degree, yet in a perfectly

healthy and natural manner. Norbert's strong and strange individuality—which had hitherto acted simply as a clog, pulling him one way, whilst circumstances were driving him in another—rose now as an active organised force, helping, spurring him on in the course in which he found himself. He was friends with his world now, for everything had threads in it which he could connect with Cressida. Not an incident in his life now but had her stamp upon it. Easy to work well and cheerfully, no matter at what mill, since it is for her sake, and to insure them a home and a future that shall be to her mind. Reading has a new and treble pleasure if he knows the same subjects are occupying her also. When he walks out, his head may revel in schemes for their life together, and devising ways of pleasing her now. Whatever comes to him touches her also. He could even take pleasure in dabbling, in his rare intervals of leisure, with piano- and organ-playing, half resigned to let that gift of his lie buried, and feeling that it is better to serve in love than to reign in music, for that all art is in its essence but the handmaid of love.

But what puzzled Master Lewis most of all was the new face he put on in general society. One evening in particular, Norbert had been dining at Mr. Lefroy senior's house, about a mile from the town, and had distinguished himself signally by his good spirits and flow of conversation. He had played his very best for the delectation of the company, and made himself uncommonly agreeable to everybody. Now 'everybody' included on this occasion not a few of the most charming Axbury girls; and Lewis Lefroy, the young-ladies' man *par excellence*, found himself, to his amazement, with the wind

completely taken out of his sails by Norbert, so marvellously relieved of his shyness as to become the life of the party, and able to show the superior metal of which he was made—a distinction that the Axbury damsels, like all women, were quick enough to appreciate.

It was a fine night, and Lewis Lefroy walked part of the way home with his friend. Leaving the road, they struck across the fields by a quiet 'smoking-path' that wound along by the banks of the Axbury Canal. It was inevitable that Lefroy should indulge in a little gentle 'chaff' on the subject that was occupying his mind in conjunction with his cigarette.

'Do you know I consider you a most unprincipled fellow,' he remarked between the puffs; 'a sad contrast to the model young man we all hoped and expected to see in you. If only she could know of your behaviour to-night, and the dangers to which you've been exposing yourself in such a reckless manner—'

'Terrible, isn't it?' said Norbert, with a faint smile, smoking on contentedly.

'Those girls made a pretty group sitting round you as you played. I was longing to throw off a sketch of you thus as "Apollo and the Muses," and send it to Miss London.'

'Do,' said Norbert good-humouredly, perfectly ready to contemplate for a joke the picture of his volatility, and with the delightful *sang-froid* with which we read of earthquakes, cyclones, and water-spouts at Valparaiso.

'Not that I should be the one to take anybody to task for the sort of thing,' observed Lefroy, anxious to guard against any suspicion of narrowness in his views; 'on the contrary, my theory is

that *immutability* is, not only impossible, but a mistake.'

'A mistake, eh?' said Norbert, amused. 'How do you make that out? Pray let us hear.'

'I can prove it to you if you like,' said Lefroy, in his cut-and-dried, lawyer-like way. 'Happiness in some shape is a game we are all hunting for. You won't deny that. Or grant so much, at least for the sake of argument.'

'Well.'

'But constancy does us out of far more delight than it can ever procure. Your monomaniac, who won't look at a lily because once in his life he took a fancy to a rose, sacrifices himself, fanatic fashion, to an idea—or would, if such a man ever existed. But men are wiser—women too.'

'What a fellow you are!' said Norbert, laughing. Lefroy's favourite moral fancy trips amused him like ingenious speculation of how to fly; or how to journey to the moon. 'Is it all a humbug, then? Won't you grant poor humanity a single unperjured soul?'

'O, as many as you like, so long as they keep or are kept from the chance of perjuring themselves,' said Lefroy impartially: 'Marianas in moated granges, Pauls and Virginias on desert islands. But I would go no further. I shall always believe, for instance, that if that model representative of female constancy, Barberine, in the play, did come off with flying colours, it was the fault of Rosenberg. You know the story.'

'No.'

'Barberine was the pretty wife of a Hungarian nobleman, Ulric, who went and bragged about her perfection at the court, defying the whole world to win her affections away from him during his absence,' said Lefroy. 'A certain Count Rosenberg accepted the



challenge, and went and set about paying his addresses to the fair Barberine, who—locked him up in the guard-room with her spinning-wheel, and made him the laughing-stock of the whole court.'

'Woman and virtue triumphant, you see,' said Norbert approvingly.

'Ah, yes; but the adventurer was such an idiot. As for Ulric, I consider him the most wretched and infatuated coxcomb on record; and he would only have had himself to blame if things had gone differently and Barberine's heart been touched. Such a superhuman strength of mind as that is more than one person has any right to exact from another. Nor do I see what should forbid us to dip into any passing interest or enjoyment that may come within our reach.'

'Aha, I see; you think it better to go on skinning the surface of things, and never to anchor anywhere.'

'Yes,' said Lefroy pensively. 'Your humming-bird hawk-moth is the wise fellow. See him hovering round all the flowers in turn, never settling; he just whips out the honey and whirrs on.'

'Bah!' said Norbert good-humouredly; 'a fig for the vagabond! Depend upon it, the flies and bees have the best of it; know more of what sweets the flower-garden has got to give.'

'Yes, and what it can take,' said Lefroy gently. 'On the one hand there are the honeysuckers you speak of; but on the other, aren't there insectivorous flowers, with a fancy for sucking the life out of the wretched neck-or-nothing bees and flies that fasten upon them?'

'You've an answer for everything,' said Norbert, laughing. 'Why, you would talk a fellow into housebreaking or cutting

throats, as soon as take a walk; and Lefroy smiled complacently, feeling he had received a compliment.

He was reminded of their dialogue the next morning, when the post brought him a letter from Mrs. de Saumarez, four pages of amusing *persiflage*, such as no men could read without smiling; the upshot of it was an invitation to come down to Monks' Orchard for a few weeks in the beginning of June.

Lefroy smiled again as he folded it up neatly, thinking. 'I shall see Barberine,' he said to himself, and sighed. 'Good opportunity to ascertain for myself how far my friend Norbert's obstinate confidence is warranted.' The proposed visit chanced to suit his plans perfectly, and he wrote off an acceptance at once.

That day Norbert's happiness rose far above Lewis Lefroy's highest felicity mark. He had to run up to London to see his chief, and had arranged his time so as to spend a few hours at Fernswold in returning. He meant to go on thence by the night-train and get back to his grindstone the next morning. His mood was that of a man with a guaranteed pleasure before him, and when the sheer delight of the anticipation is enough to sweeten impatience. Mr. Marriott, when they met in town, was thoroughly pleased with him. His nephew was an altered man since this engagement—ready, apt, methodical, by comparison, well up to the mark in every respect. The banker was all concessions and generosity. July, he hoped and intimated, would see the young people married and established. Norbert left for Lullington with a hundred pleasant things to tell Cressida. There was a house to which she had taken a fancy, and of which,

thanks to strenuous exertions on Mr. Marriott's part, they seemed likely to have the offer; the date of his liberation from his present onerous post was now certain. He was in his gayest, boyish humour, only cursing the stress of business which cut his visit so short.

Cressida's sentiments, meanwhile, seemed to her to be progressing and developing with strange and alarming rapidity. Surely she has lived through three lives in as many days. Norbert's telegram giving notice of his advent forty-eight hours hence had brought things to a climax. He was coming—which meant, she knew, that she would be called upon to talk over and decide matters that dragged their engagement down from cloudland, where it could be kept no longer. She would be spared nothing, have to realise it in twenty ways, probably to fix the week when the wedding should be!

Her brain was in a whirl the next morning. She could not keep still and at home. Knowing Alec to be off the scene that day—he had gone up to London for some racing engagement—she went over to Monks' Orchard, and spent the morning with Elise. *She* was all for the marriage, and might, thought Cressida dimly, throw cold water on this ferment and quench it. Unluckily Mrs. de Saumarez' homilies to-day had the very reverse effect to that intended. Her advocacy of the match was steadier than ever; but the whys and wherefores were also more outspoken; whilst for Cressida the last touches of pretty, false colouring disguising the picture were being ruthlessly obliterated, and it stood before her in the most unlovely tints imaginable. Elise remarked on her low spirits, and

was commiserating at first, inquiring whether Norbert was exacting, or unreasonable, or worried her with petty tempers or jealousies.

'He has no idea but what I am perfectly happy,' she replied. 'He thinks naturally that as outward things are unchanged, all is smooth. That is the worst of it, that he should deceive himself so.'

'Or the best, rather,' said Elise provokingly, but with her usual infusion of the serious into her banter. 'It appears to me that the young man has some of the most valuable qualities I know, and that you could hardly have chanced better, Cressida. Some people go through life in a dream; they are always happy, and make admirable husbands. Mr. Alleyne is clearly exceptionably adapted for his present post, and I do not see that even you will have much difficulty in making him happy—ever after.'

Because he is so easily taken in, did she mean? A conclusion for which, even in theory, Cressida was not yet ripe, and she raised her eyes in some indignation.

They were just at this point when the post came in with a letter that created a diversion.

'From Halliday, actually,' said Elise, with pleased surprise in her emphasis, and a tinge of malice too. 'Let us hear his news. Why, he dates from Alexandria!'

She began to read to herself, tantalising Cressida by an expression of countenance that seemed to hint 'private and confidential,' and only vouchsafing here and there an extract aloud. "My long silence—unavoidable—plans upset. When I left, you warned me I should not stay away more than six months. It was Cassandra prophesying; so of course I never believed you. . . . My companion has had a touch of

fever, which has decided our plans in your favour. . . . Expect to reach England in June; hope to see you shortly. You will not find me a convert to the religion of the Great Pyramid, nor even to Mahomet's ideas of Paradise;—will undertake not to mention the Nile or the Sphinx, but to be as little of a bore as can reasonably be expected of a traveller just returned from the East." Desires to be remembered to you, Cressida; seems perplexed at not having yet heard of your marriage.'

'That is good news,' resumed Elise, when she had finished reading. 'I shall be glad to see him here about that time; he will do to meet the people I have coming very well. I must write and tell him I do not mean to let him off.'

Cressida did not say a word. She fully believed she was indifferent on the subject, having schooled herself the last six months to think and talk of him as coolly as if he were a mere lay figure to her. It was significant, it was humiliating, that this token, that these few formal words from the man himself, should have power to add still further to her present perturbation. It sent her home pensive, it kept her wakeful all night long, and of that night she found no good counsel to take.

The next afternoon came, and she sat awaiting Norbert's ring with nervously clasped hands, pale face, and dark circles under her eyes. She had brought herself that morning to face the immediate worst, in imagination. To break it off. It did not sound so dreadful. Girls by the dozen changed their mind, and nobody thought seriously the worse of them, nor did they suffer for it afterwards. It was a mere peccadillo—not a crime that she should shrink from it. No lovers of this generation were inconsolable.

Romeos are as out of date as the cave man. Why, the real wrong towards Norbert would be to marry him in her present state of mind. Grant that she has taken a deplorable, false step, the farther she goes now the harder it will be to retrieve, and the more outward things bring her engagement home to her mind, the more impossible, the more inconceivable, it seems that she could ever, ever fulfil it.

The spark of loyalty that was the redeeming point in her feeling towards her boy-lover made her turn against herself; and Elise's philosophy of marriage, here applied, revolted her as the acme of fiendish iniquity.

She will be indifferent first, miserable next, reckless afterwards. Only by a refined hypocrisy will she succeed in concealing it from him. His misery seems to follow as a matter of course. Is it not her bounden duty not to expose their two lives to such havoc with her eyes open?

In the midst of her cross-questionings the bell rang. Norbert doubtless. Will she have courage to say anything of what is in her mind? She is not sure, and nerves herself as if for a literal trial of strength.

Not yet; there is a delay, a servant's parley in the passage, and presently enter the maid-servant, bearing an enormous flower-pot in her arms.

It is only Alec's debt of honour duly discharged, with a tiny note accompanying it. The shrub is placed in the window-recess, and Cressida breaks open the note with a certain trepidation.

It brings the colour to her cheek as she reads; but she has barely had time to cast her eye over his characteristic composition when enter Norbert in reality.

Alec's audacious note is thrust anywhere, out of sight, if only it

could be out of the world, and the flush fades suddenly as she goes to welcome her *promesso sposo*, has changed to an unnatural whiteness as they stand with clasped hands.

Cressida drew him towards the sofa. There they sat talking, Norbert so glad to be there again that he never noticed her momentary pallor nor her curious gravity. Cressida's heart sank lower and lower. The first instant had brought with it the dead certainty, which every minute was confirming, that she would never have the courage to speak out and undeceive him. She dared not ask herself just now how he might take it; but 'terribly cut up' he *must* be, and she was not accustomed to brave disagreeables, had never consciously and deliberately inflicted a wound or been cruel. And Norbert was not like other men. To hurt him was like hurting a child or a bird. One could not bring one's hand to do it. Again, to cut the knot between them for ever, after voluntarily assuming the chief part in his life, determining him to turn his back on the sphere where all his other hopes and wishes lay, would be such a shameful admission of meanness and heartlessness on her part. What, make a confession that amounted to this?—'I was bound to you by the strongest ties of friendship and sympathy. Yet it was for your uncle's money that I accepted your love, let you believe it was dear to me, making you shape your life in order to satisfy my vanity and ambition. It is time you should know this; for just as I played false with you then, I shall not keep faith with you now.'

O, never! There was a self-humiliation in that which she could not bear. Better anything. Better go through with it, shut

her eyes, wait at least. For chance might help her, free her, some way. She might die, or Norbert, or Mr. Marriott's bank might smash—there was a crisis just now in the commercial world, she believed. Anything seemed more thinkable than that Norbert and she should become man and wife, or that little Cressida, so well beloved by everybody, should make herself odious in the sight of men and angels.

That boy loved her as none in the wide world would ever love her again. That she knew; and the sense of it, and of the rocks ahead upon which he or she or both were drifting, subdued her strangely. Her manner to him was even more gentle and tender than usual; a feeling of profound sadness and pity possessed her. The trouble on her mind seemed to raise her to seriousness, and to soften her, freeing her from self-consciousness and trivialities, and Norbert thought her divine.

'How cold your hand is!' he observed suddenly.

'Is it? One is always chilly after a bad night, you know. I was over-tired yesterday, and could not sleep.'

She rose quickly, withdrawing her hand, walked to the window, and mechanically, without thinking, bent down over the lily to smell it.

'What a gorgeous flower!' observed Norbert, who had not noticed it, or anything, till this moment. 'Where does it come from?'

'Monks' Orchard,' replied Cressida briefly.

'By the way, I hear they are going to be tremendously gay there next month. So Lefroy says; he's coming down, you know. What do you think of it all?'

'That I wish you were going to be there, instead of Mr. Lefroy,'

said Cressida very sincerely, with a little shiver.

'Ah, that's quite impossible, I'm sorry to say,' said Norbert, with resignation. He *was* sorry, if Cressida would have liked to have him there; but so far as balls and merry meetings of that sort were concerned, he was thankful to be out of them.

'Really impossible?' repeated Cressida wistfully.

'Why, yes! I have my hands quite full for this month and next. The senior clerk has been ill, and that means double work and responsibility for me. But in another six weeks, Cressida, my probation ends. I have my uncle's word for it. You should have seen the old boy this morning—all smiles and soft sawder. I'm to have a long holiday, and the partnership soon. So in July, Cressida, we shall have only ourselves to think of; and we shall be inclined to be as selfish as we can, sha'n't we?'

Cressida raised her eyes. Her heart seemed to have stood still. Is this the moment to say, 'I have been cheating you, or helping you to cheat yourself—taking everything from you, with nothing real to give in return. I was your friend once; but from the day when I promised to marry you, I became your enemy, the worst you ever had. I shrink from fulfilling my word, for your sake as well as mine?'

She looked at him, tried, or fancied she tried, to speak, but the words stuck in her throat. She thought of his joyless home, his ill-starred life, his strange, passionate, clinging nature, his sacrifice to her. Surely these would haunt her for ever! O, it would be easier to pluck out her own eye, she thinks, than to be Norbert's executioner.

So she wavers and waits, looking as sweet as Elaine and beguiling as Vivien. It is habit with her—she does not know how to look otherwise. Her face betrays no clue that could disquiet her lover. Suddenly Mr. Landon breaks in upon them. Cressida breathes freely again. It is a reprieve, she thinks. Ay, but her chance is gone.

Norbert left by the night-train. Cressida thinks it will be easier to write. But when she sits down and takes up the pen a thousand fresh hesitations start up—much generous compunction for her lover, but still more on her own account. Her imagination runs on, and she sees herself in a far worse plight than before her engagement—poor as ever, dull as ever, and marked as a jilt.

'I do not care what happens to me,' she exclaimed; 'but I cannot—Elise was right. It is folly my trying to turn back. I shall let it come. Till then, the best is not to see or to think.'

## AN AMEER'S FÊTE.

It takes place in Hyderabad, the Nizam's capital, and the giver is the Ameer, Vickar-Ool-Oomerah. A swell among swells is this self-same Ameer: the Nizam's uncle, one of the regents, and with the bluest of blue blood in his Mohammedan veins. A very Rothschild, too, in wealth; with jewels of gold and jewels of silver, and with diamonds, emeralds, and other precious stones, worth many a king's ransom. His palace, the Barra Durry, in the very heart of the dirty city, is rich in crystal, upholstery, and articles of *virtù*; and as he is of a scientific turn he has a room or two furnished with elaborate mechanical toys, the machinery of which he delights to set in motion, and with valuable philosophical instruments, which, however, he handles cautiously since the day when, it is said, he mistook a charged Leyden jar for a big bottle of French plums. Extensive jagheers call him lord and master, and thousands of dependents salaam and rub their noses in the dust in his presence. He has horses of pure Arab breed, elephants, camels, oxen; and herds of sheep, goats, and swine—no, not the unclean animal, by the way; the Prophet forbid that!—graze over his far-stretching pastures. How many long sonorous appellations he has in addition to that of Ameer, I know not—I believe that they are as numerous as unpronounceable—but this I do know, that in the military cantonments of the Hyderabad subsidiary force these designations are dropped, and the

old gentleman is known and called by the simple sacerdotal title of The Vicar.

The gilt carded invitations he has issued to us, the officers of the said force for the *fête*, name the unreasonably early hour of 6 P.M. for assembling, and it is therefore blazingly hot when we leave our bungalows in Secunderabad, Begumpett, Bolarum, for the five or six miles between us and the city-gates. We men are in all the glory of scarlet and gold; our ladykind in evening toilettes; and the slanting rays of the setting sun are playing mischief with fair faces and *décollétées* shoulders, they are fast becoming 'ruddier than the cherry.' We travel over the dusty and nasty smelling roads between cantonment and Hyderabad, either in hired ramshackled gharries and bullock-coaches or in our own phaetons, mail-carts, wagonettes, drags—all those nondescript vehicles which make their appearance on special occasions from the compounds of a large Indian up-country station. Some of these carriages are of modern fashion, and of English or Presidency build; Long Acre or Madras or Bombay may honestly lay claim to their original design and construction. Others again are antediluvian in style and form, may possibly have belonged to Arthur, first Duke of Wellington, when he was quartered hereabouts, or to Monsieur le Général Raymond when he was waging war in these parts, and even then may have sprung into shape from the back shed of a



local native coachwright. Ditto our horses. Some are Arabs or Walers, young, fresh, satin-skinned, worth hundreds of gold mohurs; whereas others are 'screws' or 'casters' from the cavalry and artillery, old and worn out, spavined, broken-kneed, ungroomed, and buyable for a handful or two of the thick, heavy, badly-coined silver halli-sicca rupee of the Nizam's dominions. But somehow or another we jog along; the jogging, however, decidedly of the worst to those of us who happen to be in bullock-coaches belonging to native hirers drawn by a pair of Deccan-raised bullocks. No uncomfortable style of travelling is your roomy, well-enshioned, springy bullock-coach, with a pair of large fast-trotting Mysore bullocks; but the vehicle of the same type called a *nibb*, narrow, low, hard as to its seats, almost springless, and with two small, slow, obstinate *byles* (bullocks), which a garmentless and odoriferous Tamil or Hindoo Jehu has at every step to force along with much 'cluck-clucking' from his mouth, and with more, much more, tail-twisting and whip-thonging from his never-resting arms—I do not know in existence a more tiresome and heart-breaking means of locomotion. And so, passing through bazaars and by chowkees (stations), where the green crescent standard is hoisted, and where parties of the Nizam's police salute us deferentially, we cross the bridged river Moosah, drive through the arched gateway of the tumbling-to-pieces fortifications, and are presently within the city of Hyderabad. Here we alight from our carriages, for the streets, or rather lanes, of the town leading to the Ameer's palace are much too narrow for 'wheels,' and the palanquins and elephants awaiting must take us

on. The former mode of conveyance is, we see at a glance, at a discount, and especially among our gentler sex—entrance into it, for them, is neither graceful nor pretty, back hair is apt to be disarranged and dainty skirts crushed and tumbled, besides which companionship is out of the question. But in the howdah on the elephant's back, a ride—and to tell the truth somewhat of a squeeze in close sitting with a gay cavalier—is not only popular and pleasant, but quite the allowable transit by dear old Mrs. Grundy, whose eyes are sharp, and tongue sharper, in an Indian station. So, *à bas* the palanquin, *en haut* the howdah; and as the huge beast bearing it kneels, up we—cavalier and dame aforesaid—clamber, hold fast, when, from a touch of the mahout, he rises, and off we go, Indian file, with a ship-in-a-short-head-sea kind of motion, staring into the verandahs of houses on either hand; looking out for Mohammedan beauties whom we do not see; passing squalid beggars of both sexes and all ages, clamorous for backsheesh in the shape of the copper cube dub of the Nizam's coin; hearing jerky syllables, which sound uncommonly like maledictions on our infidel heads; and seeing villanous-looking Arabs with loaded matchlocks and lighted fuses sprawling on steps and thresholds, quite within touching distance of their firearms, ready, if they dared, to pot the dogs of Christians as they passed. On, through the close, narrow, miry streets, inhaling one moment an odour not altogether disagreeable of curry—stuffs, spices, fruits, and aromatic herbs, and at the next—ugh!—an atmosphere in which sewer-gas is about the most pleasant-smelling component. O Richardson of Hygieo-

polis, how much art thou needed in the Nizam's capital ! Presently we pass the imposing mosque, with its picturesque minarets ; a little further, and our *cortège* turns up a very narrow and, if possible, more nasty-smelling passage ; and just as we are wondering where the deuce this filthy strait leads to we enter large gates, and find ourselves in the spacious quadrangle of the Barra Durry. Trumpets sounding a most discordant flourish, drums beating a terribly flat tattoo, and a band playing 'God save the Queen' without any regard to time or air, greet our *entrée*. A guard of honour, formed on one side of Sepoys, and on the other of nondescript warriors, the like of which we have never cast eyes on before, and who are quite beyond our military ken, receive us with such a loose and irregular 'present arms' as would drive F.M. the Duke of Cambridge stark-staring mad. There is no mistaking the company on the right : there is the Leadenhall-street scarlet coatee, the white trousers, the turban, the sandals, served out when this century was young, by dear old John Company to his Madras native army ; served out, worn out, discarded, then bought by the Vicar, to clothe his vassals. Yes ; there are the pipe-clayed cross-belts, and the Tower of London marked Brown Bess musket. The identity and sex of this body is certain enough. But who on earth, and what on earth, are the troops on the left ? We see them clothed in green tunics and pantaloons ; they are turbaned and sandalled ; armed too with rifles, lances, and swords ; their figures are well developed pectorally, and inclining to *embonpoint*. Generally they seem to need the drill-sergeant, and certainly to call for more rigid discipline under arms ; for

while they stand at 'attention,' and are supposed to be saluting us, two small children, one quite in ebon nudity, and the other with nothing on worth mentioning, are running in and between the 'files' playing. Playing ? with whom ? Why, with their mammas and sisters of course ; for this guard, which has so puzzled us, is composed entirely of women—the Ameer's amazons, kept to protect his zenana, and of which—the troops, not the harem—he is remarkably proud. Between these two lines of male and female soldiery our elephants tramp ; down they kneel at the base of a flight of steps ; we descend, and are in the presence of our host. He, stands on his threshold with his family—bar the womenkind, who, of course, do not show—around him. He is well into the sere and yellow leaf, looks as if he had led a fast life in the gay city of Hyderabad, and burnt the candle not only at both ends, but a good deal in the middle also. His own apparel is plain and simple enough, but that of his kith and kin gorgeous. Rich and rare are the gems they wear, splendid are their jewelled buttons, buckles, belts, sword and dagger hilts—their rings, watches, and charms, attached to massive gold chains, and worn outside their velvet and fine cloth gaberdines. Restrain it as we will, the idea will crop up, What a glorious haul of loot there would be were Hyderabad and the Ameer's Barra Durry and surroundings given up to that luxury, if 'Stand and deliver !' could be said to that young copper-coloured gentleman with the string of Orient pearls around his neck, or to him a shade or two lighter in complexion, who is fiddling with the Golconda diamonds in his coat studs and fastenings ! I can see by her face

how 'fetching' that emerald pendent hanging from a boy Nawab's throat has become to that dark-haired lady of 'ours,' how she yearns to see it resting on her own bosom, and how fatal will be her indignation with the man she calls lord if that same gem is not hers when Hyderabad is sacked. I note all this as the Ameer comes forward to receive us. He shakes hands—'Europe fashion'—with all, all but the British Resident at the Nizam's Court—one of his guests—but for that swell official he has a much more demonstrative welcome, a greeting bordering on the affectionate and decidedly, to us bystanders, on the ludicrous. The two dignitaries advance, they are close together; twice they open arms right and left, put them over each other's shoulders and make a feint of embracing, and twice they seem just upon the point of kissing, but to think better of it at the last moment. As far as our representative is concerned, we are rather glad that the kiss has not been completed: native dishes, as a rule, are highly spiced with full-flavoured condiments. Now walk into the halls and saloons of a magnificent palace solid with marble and Parian, rich with gold and colour, brilliant with crystal, and garnished with furniture of London and Parisian make. We glance at cabinets containing the clockwork figures our host rejoices in. Soon we hear the familiar 'Roast Beef of Old England' sounding from a full military band, announcing that 'the wittles is up;' and we enter a spacious banqueting-hall, enter how we please and escorting any one we like—all but the Resident again, who leads the way, hooked on to the fleshless arm of the Vicar. The dinner is *à la Russe* and of the best, and the delicate edibles of Fortnum and Mason

and the glorious vintages of Gessler and Røderer are lavishly abundant. In the intervals of our repast, and while listening to Rossini or Gounod or Offenbach, well rendered by the Nizam's band, we watch young Hyderabad feed, and we are lost in astonishment at his capacity for quantity and variety of food. Will he never, we think, 'feel as if his jacket was buttoned'? Faithful Mohammedan Jeames or Chawles behind his chair loads his plate with flesh, fowl, and fruit at one and the same time, and seems pained when noble young nawab or rajah does not make clean the platter, but which in truth he seldom fails to do. But though he crams to repletion, he drinks not, save cool sherbet or pure iced water. Not so we! The Ameer's champagne, burgundy, claret, his h. - and - s. find way, frequent way, down our parched throats; for the night is hot, the room not well punkahed, the coolies behind with the large fans sleepy and sluggish, and the sitting is 'awfully' prolonged and wearisome. But it is over at last, and Resident and Ameer still arm-locked and leading, we stroll into an open court, with couches and chairs arranged in a semi-circle, and with a snowy cloth stretched on the ground in front. Those of us unused to city parties hail these preparations as omens of a dance, and have visions of 'jolly' waltzes and galops with fair partners on our arms. Alas for our disappointment! your stolid Asiatic, Jeypore of quadrille notoriety excepted, will be danced to, but, like the Tenth of old, 'don't dance.' 'Why, then, if not for a hop, the chalked white calico, and the seats for chaperones and wallflowers?' The nautch—the 'naughty nautch,' as Aliph Cheem calls it in his inimitable *Lays of Ind*—is on, and the dancing-girls

are about to give us a taste of their quality. I am not going to describe this performance; friend A. C. afore named has already done so in most delectable verse. Enough to say that for an hour or more we are a wearied and a yawning audience; that we soon have got tired of looking at the gold-embroidered robes, jewels, nose, ear, and toe rings of not very young or peculiarly good-looking copper-faced damsels; that we have failed to see grace or the poetry of motion in their hand-wavings, feet-shufflings and other movements; that few of us have understood six lines of the long love-poem they have been reciting; that we have anathematised the shrill squeak of the pipes and the monotonous beat of the tom-toms of their band; that we have put down the whole affair as 'awfully slow,' and agreed that a London ballet, with its less draped *danseuses*, is a livelier exhibition.

Then we wonder how it comes to pass that the Oriental grandee will spend so much money, and be so much entertained by these dancing-girls and their vapid meaningless gyrations. But we hear it whispered that this is really no nautch at all, as we have seen it; that the exhibition the native delights in, and pays so many rupees for, is when European ladies and gentlemen are not present.

The *corps de ballet* disposed of, we again follow the Ameer and the Resident, who apparently have never let go of each other, to another courtyard, where fireworks, without which no Hyderabad *fête* is complete, is the next item of the bill of fare in the evening's *tamasha*. And a disastrous item it was; for while rockets and all kinds of pyrotechnics are flying and fizzing

and whirring and bursting out flame for our gratification, while 'villanous saltpetre' is smelling in our noses, while we are admiring the expert art of the native Broek, and thinking what a haul he is making out of our friend the Vicar's coffers—bang! there is a report as loud as that of the eighty-one-ton gun, and shrieks and cries follow. We rush to see 'what's up,' and find that an old honey-combed mortar, used for discharging some kind of firework, has burst, and has killed and wounded a score at least of a thick crowd standing around it. Surgery cannot do much for most of the poor fellows lying about. Many are dead, more mutilated and dying; a few have got off comparatively cheaply with contusions and fractures. These latter are sent at once to the Government Hospital. The former their friends remove, not without very high-pitched lamentations; for your Eastern mourners, the ladies in particular, are demonstrative in grief. These widows the Ameer will have to provide for, and though he will do it willingly, it will not cost him a fortune; for it is remarkable how few rupees will satisfy madame, the native relict, for the loss of her husband.

And now of course the *fête* ends, the big crowd disperses, and we too wish the Ameer good-night. We receive from his hands the accustomed nuzzur (present) of wee vials of ottar of rose, the number given rated according to rank; we remount our elephants, traverse by torchlight the quiet, but still full-flavoured, perhaps even more full-flavoured, streets of the city; regain our vehicles, return to cantonments; and Vickar - Ool - Oomerah's *fête*, and even its *finale*, are forgotten in dreamland.

## THE CURIOUS ADVENTURES OF A FIELD CRICKET.

### CHAPTER VII.

HOW WE ALL MADE OURSELVES USEFUL ACCORDING TO OUR ABILITY.

THE trap into which we had fallen could not have been set long, for the grass-roots hanging from the roof were still fresh. The floor was smooth and very clean. There was a round hole in the centre, and I thought to myself that this would be the only spot through which we could hope to escape—at least, that I could; for the spider could easily go up with the aid of a thread to one or the other entrance of the broken gallery. She might even take the glowworm with her; but as for me, I was much too heavy: and even supposing the thread to be strong enough to bear me, I felt that it would be quite impossible for me to climb it, for I was not accustomed to that kind of exercise, nor was I so constituted as to be able to attempt it with any chance of success.

I approached the hole alluded to, and began to remove the earth which stopped it up. This did not take long, for my claws soon came in contact with an insurmountable obstacle, and I discovered with horror that the pot rested on a stone, so that it was quite impossible to get out that way.

'You must know,' observed the spider, 'that the trap being set for mole crickets, who can burrow in the ground with the greatest ease, it was absolutely necessary to take that preliminary precaution to prevent them from escaping through the hole.'

'But how ever am I to get out?'

VOL. XXXIII. NO. CXCVI.

'Leave that to me,' added the spider; 'that's my business. The first thing to be decided is, which of the two passages you will take. For my part, I think it will be imprudent to go back to the one through which we came. We might run into the very jaws of the mole. I am disposed to give the preference to the other. We don't know where it goes to; but it seems to be the safer of the two. What do you think?'

'I am quite of your opinion.'

'And you, Firefly?'

'I agree with you too. I place myself entirely under your guidance.'

'Well, as we are of one mind, let's set to work without delay.'

As she spoke, the spider threw a thread towards the opening we had chosen, and, having fastened the other end to the ground, she clung to it, and strengthened it with a second. She then went up and down again and again, each time adding one thread to the others, till she considered the kind of rope she had made to be strong enough. That done, she spun a second thread parallel with and at a short distance from the first, strengthening it in the same fashion. I watched her at work with an interest which will be readily understood. When she had finished her two parallel ropes, she connected them by cross-threads laid horizontally.

'Ah! I cried, 'a ladder!'

'What do you think of my idea?'

'It's brilliant, and I admire your ingenuity.'

'You see,' she went on, 'I did well to cling to you in our flight. Your speed saved me, and one good turn deserves another. Firefly helps us too, for without his lamp we could not see how to make our escape.'

All the time she was talking the spider was working away at her web with extraordinary zeal, and it was very soon completed.

'Now then, forwards!' she cried joyfully. 'But wait a minute, whilst I carry up Firefly; it won't take an instant, and you will see better how to climb up.'

The glowworm's ascent was the work of a moment, and once up he settled on the edge of the pot near the passage, against which rested the ladder, and turned his lamp round so as fully to light it up.

I began to ascend. The spider had had the forethought to fasten a strong thread round my body, the other end of which she had fastened to one of the beams of the ceiling. By its means she hoisted me up, and with this assistance I managed without too much difficulty to reach the last round of the ladder. We were soon all three together on the upper edge of the pot, ready to enter the unknown passage, at the further end of which we hoped to find ourselves in safety.

The passage was too narrow for us to march abreast, and after a short consultation it was decided that Firefly should lead the way and light our steps. I was to follow, to overturn any obstacles which should present themselves, and the spider was to bring up the rear.

'Let us agree how to act in case of an alarm,' I said; 'so that we may not lose our presence of mind. You, Epeira' (it will be remem-

bered that our companion belonged to that family of spiders)—'you, Epeira, have nothing to fear; we cannot be attacked from behind. If any enemy presents himself, it will be in front; in that case, Firefly, turn round at once and slip behind me. I undertake to bear the brunt of the attack. As the best armed and the strongest of us three, that duty devolves on me.'

Truth to tell, I made a mental reservation when I suggested this order of march, which it would never have done to confide to my companions. We might wander about a long time in these subterranean passages without food, or the possibility of procuring any; in a word, Firefly was a feeble creature, and spiders have bad reputations. Thus far our companion had been very kind to him; she had saved his life in our precipitous flight, and I liked to believe that her motive was gratitude for the service which had been rendered to her by him, rather than a wish to secure a necessary light. Still, hunger is imperative and a bad counsellor—at least, with some natures; and who could tell that we might not soon be enduring the pangs of famine?

By sending Firefly in advance, and making the spider go behind, I protected the latter from the danger of committing in a moment of oblivion an act on every account to be deprecated.

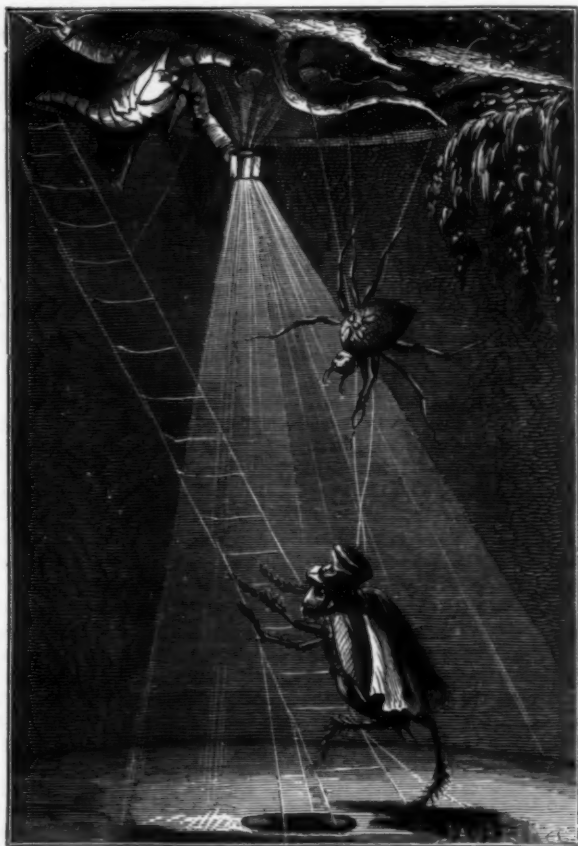
Everything was settled according to my suggestions; the glowworm led the way and entered the passage. I followed him, and the spider followed me. We went on for some little time in silence. The passage, though wide enough for me to walk with comfort, was not sufficiently so for me to be able to turn round, should occasion arise for doing so. It was very tortuous and uneven, and it



seemed to me to slope very much to the left, though its irregularity made it difficult to determine its exact direction.

We had been walking thus for some minutes when, in crossing a

spot where the earth was rather loose, one of my legs sank right in, and, the ground suddenly giving way beneath me, I was flung with the loose soil into a hollow which was fortunately not



very deep. At the cry I gave as I fell Firefly hurried back, and we were able to make out the cause of the accident. I had fallen into a vast gallery, which here ran under our passage, from which it was only separated by a thin layer of earth, and this layer had

been broken by the weight of my body.

The same idea struck us all at once. This vast gallery was one of the mole's roads.

It was dangerous and altogether useless to linger where we were. With the aid of my comrades I

therefore regained the passage, a work of little difficulty, and we resumed our march.

A fresh *contretemps*, and one of a more disagreeable nature, however, occurred a little further on. Our passage, after turning abruptly to the left, led into the very gallery into which I had fallen.

We stopped and consulted as to what had better be done. The spider carefully examined the place, and appeared to reflect.

'It is evident,' she said presently, 'that the mole cricket did not pierce her passage as we find it to-day, or make it lead into this gallery, for fun. The latter is probably of more recent construction, and the passage has been cut across. We shall doubtless find its continuation in the wall opposite to us.'

This supposition seemed reasonable. After having listened for some time to make sure that the gallery was empty, I therefore followed the direction of the passage, which here described an acute angle, and I examined the opposite wall, expecting to find a wide opening in it. I was disappointed, and told my companions so.

'You must be mistaken,' said the spider. 'Come, we can easily find out the right way to go. Here, Firefly, turn round and go back.'

Firefly did as he was requested, and just as he was disappearing round the next corner the spider cried, 'Stop!'

The gallery was absolutely dark, except for a luminous spot on the wall opposite to the one against which we stood. The spider pointed out the spot to me, and said,

'There, that is where we ought to find the continuation of our passage. Dig there, cricket.'

I set to work, but in vain I dug

and burrowed in the ground, sinking into it up to my shoulders; no hollow did I find.

It seemed probable that at the place to which we had penetrated the passage made a turn, and followed the same direction as the mole's gallery. In that case it was useless to hunt for it any longer; there was nothing to be done but to follow the gallery itself, in spite of the unpleasant encounters we might expect in it.

These reflections, which the spider made *sotto voce*, and as it were aside, were shared by myself.

Such was the situation when rapid footsteps were heard in the gallery a little distance off.

'Quick, to the passage!' cried the spider, clutching at my tail.

But before reaching it I was knocked down by some animal running rapidly past. It was a little field mouse, and judging by the increased speed of its flight, I think its terror on striking me was no less than ours.

'What a shock! I thought it was a shrew.'

'Come,' said the spider, 'let's follow him; there is nothing else to be done. As long as he does not turn back we may make sure that the passage is free to him, and there will be no fear of our walking blindly into the jaws of a mole. If he passes again we will take counsel together. Come, Firefly.'

I was struck by the justice of the spider's supposition, and with him and the glowworm clutching on to the two ends of my tail for the sake of advancing more rapidly, I set off at a trot, as the width of the path allowed of my adopting that pace.

Presently I stopped to take breath, saying,

'Have you any idea of the time?'

'It is breakfast-time!' sighed Firefly sadly.

That was exactly my own opinion, but the mole cricket was no longer there to get us food. Before we could breakfast we must get out of this interminable subterranean passage.

'Forward, my friends!'

I resumed my course, still towing my companions. We soon came to a bifurcation of the gallery. I again stopped.

'We will follow the trace of the field mouse, that will be our best way,' said the spider.

As she spoke she carefully examined the ground. I saw her enter first one and then the other of the two galleries before her; then she called the glowworm, and begging him to make his lamp shine more brightly, she continued her examination, walking slowly and appearing undecided.

'Well?' I inquired.

'It is strange,' she said: 'thus far the animal's track has been single; but now the traces of its passage are numerous and confused in both branches of the gallery. I think he must have met with some obstacle in one of the passages, and turned back to try the other. That of course would be simple enough; but what complicates the matter is that he has apparently been unable to advance in the second either. The mouse seems to have run backwards and forwards several times in both of the paths before us.'

'What do you gather from that?'

'I really don't know what to think.'

'Might there not be a mole in one of the passages?'

'No; the mouse would not have run against it a second and a third time.'

'What shall we do?'

'We will go on at all risks. What other course is open to us? Perhaps what was an insurmountable obstacle to the mouse would

not be so to us. First of all we have light; and secondly, we are so much smaller that we might slip through where he could not. Let's go to the left; the path seems to lead up, and we want to get towards the surface of the ground.'

We took the path on the left, but we did not go far. At a little distance from its opening the passage ended in a blind alley. We retraced our steps and tried the other. That led down rather abruptly, and we had not been in it a minute before an unexpected obstacle brought us up short, and at the same time explained the running backwards and forwards of the mouse, of which the marks on the ground gave proof. The gallery was full of water—a fact easily explained by the nature of the soil, which consisted of compact impermeable clay. The water was probably part of the heavy rain which had fallen a few nights before. We exchanged looks of great disappointment.

'If the gallery continues to slope downwards,' said the spider, 'the water must reach nearly to the top. But if it goes up a little distance from here, perhaps we can pass.'

'It seems to me,' I said, 'that where the mouse has passed we may do the same. Don't you think so?'

'Yes, of course, if the mouse has passed at all; but that remains to be proved.'

'If he had retraced his steps, we should have met him.'

'He may have turned round whilst we were in the passage on the left. In any case I am going to see how the matter stands. Wait for me here.'

With this the spider spun a thread above the water towards the roof of the passage, and we soon saw her disappear in the darkness, clinging to it.

Some little time elapsed before

she returned. At last she reappeared.

'We can pass,' she said; 'the gallery runs up further on. The passage will be rather difficult towards the middle, but it is practicable, which is the main point. You're not afraid of getting wet?'

'Not a bit,' we replied.

'But how about your lamp,

Firefly—is there any danger of its going out?'

'Not the least; it's proof against submersion.'

'All is well, then, and this is what we have to do. You, Firefly, clutch hold of the cricket's shoulders, and don't let go whatever happens. As for you, cricket, I am going to fasten a thread



round your neck, and at a signal I shall give you are to go into the water until you are out of your depth. Leave the rest to me. Only take care when you are floating to draw your limbs together, so as not to risk striking against the walls of the passage. If such a *contretemps* should occur, the thread by which I mean to pull you up might break, and that would lead to complications.'

Everything was done according to the instructions of the spider. She then suspended herself to the thread which she had spun along the top of the passage, and at the word 'forwards' pronounced by her I entered the water, through which I walked as long as I felt any ground beneath my feet. That

soon failed me, and I then drew up my legs and held my breath. The washing of the water against my body showed me that we were advancing, towed by the spider. For one moment I seemed to glide to the bottom and to remain stationary. I thought the thread had broken, and you can imagine the terror which seized me. Fortunately, however, my anxiety did not last long. I again felt the thread dragging me on, and a few instants afterwards I was able to put my feet to the ground. We were soon out of the water.

'What was the matter in the middle of the journey? I inquired of the spider. 'I thought for a minute that we should not get to the other side.'

'One of the fastenings of my thread to the ceiling gave way, and I fell into the water myself. I managed to repair the mischief, though, and the dangerous transit is effected.'

Meanwhile the glowworm, whose lamp did not appear to have suffered from its wetting, was examining the ground.

'The mouse got over the difficulty too,' he said; 'here are the marks of his feet; they can be seen quite easily.'

Beyond this point the gallery continued to lead up.

'I noticed,' observed the spider, 'that where the water had got in the roof of the passage was not of earth, but of stone. The mole probably had to burrow

beneath it in order to pass it.'

We resumed our march. The footprints of the mouse, which were very clearly visible on the ground, encouraged us to hope that we should meet with no further obstacles.

This hope soon became certainty. In a few minutes we reached the end of our gallery, which we found led into a large subterranean chamber, to which the daylight penetrated. It was a rabbit-burrow, the entrance to which we could see a little distance off. We got out quickly enough, and it was with a feeling of intense relief that we gazed once more on the sun, then appearing in full glory above the horizon.



## CHAPTER VIII.

## A LESSON IN APPLIED GEOMETRY.

'THE next thing to be done is to get some breakfast,' said the spider. 'I shall spin a web at once on this currant-bush. Where shall I meet you again?'

'Here, of course. Don't you think that will be best? Firefly and I will go and look for food. In a quarter of an hour at the most we shall have satisfied our hunger, and then we will come back to you.'

'All right. I'll throw a thread from my web to that blade of grass near you. When you are back you can shake it to let me know, and I'll come to you.'

With that the spider went her way and Firefly his, whilst I remained at the entrance to the burrow to look about me, and ascertain whereabouts we were.

The result of my inspection was as follows: The burrow was situated on the borders of a wood growing on a little hill behind me. Before me and a short distance off was a strawberry-bed, sloping gently down to the wide path where I had narrowly escaped being crushed by a carriage the evening of my arrival. Beyond gleamed the waters of the pond. On the left and on a rather lower level I could see the iron gate through which I had made my entrance into the grounds. From the commanding position which I occupied I could see the whole of the house in the distance on the right. It was a fine building, with a flight of steps leading up to it, a verandah, and a turret on either side, surmounted by a weathercock.

It was not difficult to make out the exact spot where I had met the mole cricket, and where also

the entrance to her house was situated. The prolonged stay I had made there during the preceding days had rendered me familiar with all the surrounding objects. There was no doubt that it was down there, beside that bit of white stone on the edge of the path. We had traversed a great distance underground, and I congratulated myself on the fortunate termination of our adventure. This reflection suggested another, and I could not help laughing at the remembrance of the circular journey of an hour's duration which I had made in the gardener's trap.

Above me the spider was busily making her web. That reminded me that it was time I had some food. A few tender blades of grass soon appeased my hunger. That done, I espied a stone with a little hollow beneath it, and having assured myself that I could retreat to this natural refuge in case of necessity, I set myself down close to it, and watched the spider at work.

I had often seen spiders making their webs, but I had never before noticed how they set about the production of their first thread. I had now a good opportunity of satisfying my curiosity on that point. I therefore thus accosted my friend.

'Epeira,' I cried, 'just explain how it is that, though you were beside me a minute ago, you have managed to fasten a thread to that currant-bush without first climbing on to it?'

'Nothing could be easier,' she replied. 'First of all, you must know that in the end of my body I have a little sack filled with a



liquid, which instantaneously dries when I exude it, and is converted into long silken threads. Before it reaches the air, however, it has to pass through a great number of minute orifices. The thread which

looks to you single really consists of some hundreds of threads of extreme tenuity, which as they leave my body adhere and form the one you see.

‘Moreover, I can produce as



many fine threads from my spinnerets as I choose. When I want to stretch the first I make it invisible, and so light that it floats in the air at the mercy of the very faintest breeze. I spin it rapidly till it is of a great length, and soon its free end attaches itself to some

object, often at a great distance off. That done, I tighten this first thread, and from it I seek about for some other place to fasten the second. I proceed in the same manner with the third. I dispose them in the form of a triangle. I need not say that when my first

thread is stretched I strengthen it with others, and that I do so as I climb along it. When my large triangle is once formed, I cut off the angles by oblique threads to form a polygon, and it is within this polygon that I make the radii, and lastly the spiral which binds them together.'

I thanked the spider for her explanation. I had not quite understood the terms triangle, polygon, and spiral which she had used, but as I watched her at work I guessed their meaning. I had learnt what I most wished to know—how she managed to produce her first thread. Satisfied with my lesson, I began to sing to pass the time. I had just finished my third or fourth shake when I heard a voice from beneath the stone. I listened. It seemed as if some one were calling to me.

'Cricket!' murmured a stifled voice. 'Cricket!'

I drew back into the hollow and listened again.

'Cricket!'

The cry was more distinct.

'Who is there?' I said. 'Who calls me?'

'An unfortunate staphylinus buried alive and dying of hunger. Come and help me.'

'How can I help you?'

'By piercing a passage in the direction of my voice. I beseech you, for Heaven's sake, to do me this service.'

I hesitated for a moment. I had little enough in common with the staphylinidæ family. I did not think much of their restless, impudent, quarrelsome, and unsociable ways. However, my own happy and recent escape from a painful situation made me sympathise with the misfortunes of others. So my hesitation did not last long, and I began to burrow in the ground behind my hollow

in the direction from which proceeded the voice of the staphylinus.

I reached him in a few minutes. I then made my way out backwards, and he lost no time in following me.

'Thank you,' he said, as he came out; 'you have rendered me a signal service. But for you I should have perished with hunger beneath that stone.'

'How ever did you get there?'

'O, it's my home, and I, like a fool, allowed myself to be shut up in it. Three days ago a quantity of earth was drifted against my door in a violent shower. When I saw my danger it was already too late to escape. I was blocked in. I tried to get out, but it was of no use, for I am not able to burrow in the ground. I had lost all hope of ever again seeing the light of the sun, when your song struck upon my ear.'

I looked at the staphylinus as he spoke. He was of good height, of a dull bluish-black colour, strongly built, and armed with a pair of pretty formidable mandibles.

'You seem exhausted,' I observed.

'I am quite done up,' he replied, in a voice which betrayed his weakness. 'I should be very glad of something to eat.'

'What is your usual food?'

'Larvæ, worms, and that sort of thing. But I really think at this present moment I could manage anything.'

'Well, look under that strawberry-bush down there. I saw a slug there just now, which will be the very thing for you.'

He did not need twice telling, but ran to the spot I pointed out. Suddenly a great fear seized me, and I followed him till I saw him find the slug and bury his jaws in its back. I then re-

turned with my mind more at ease. My fear had been that he might perhaps meet our friend Firefly; in his famished condition he would have made but one mouthful of our poor comrade.

I went on with my singing.

Not knowing what to do with myself after an hour of this amusement, I went to see if the spider had had good sport. She was

motionless in the centre of her web, the absolute integrity of which proved that she was still waiting for her breakfast. This did not surprise me. The sun, now at the zenith of its course, was shining brilliantly in a cloudless sky; all Nature seemed asleep, and not so much as a midge was stirring anything. Now and then a wasp or a bee flew rapidly past,



but the rustling of their wings alone broke the universal silence.

'Ah, ah!' I thought to myself, 'it's not much breakfast you'll get, and your dinner won't be caught either in a hurry. However, you are blessed with both patience and craft. I wish you good luck.'

Reflecting thus I resumed my walk.

I followed the borders of the wood already referred to. Between it and the strawberry-bed which stretched away beneath me on the left was a neglected kind of paddock, in which grew tufts of heather, coarse grass, and a few furze-bushes. The soil was dry, barren, and sandy. The place seemed to be uninhabited, and except for half a dozen grass-

hoppers and a few ants not a living creature was to be seen. The grasshoppers were of the variety with gray bodies and blue under-wings. They came to me as soon as they saw me, and bade me welcome.

Grasshoppers, as of course you know, are our cousins-german, and we have always been on very good terms with them. There is a great family likeness between us. To be quite accurate, however, I must own that they are in some points our superiors; they have more elegance, more grace, an easier carriage, and more vivacity than we crickets. They cultivate music with enthusiasm, and consider themselves proficient in the art. I must observe,

though, that there is a great monotony about their style—a want of expression, which ends by becoming wearisome to susceptible ears. They have one particularly harsh shrill note, in which they indulge to excess. I hasten to add that this is merely my private opinion. I do not pretend to be expressing the general verdict. I am myself an artist, naturally disposed to think my own style preferable to any other, so that I am a little open to the charge of prejudice. I shall, I hope, be pardoned for this criticism on my big cousins, considering how frankly I have admitted their undeniable superiority in other respects.

‘Ah, it was you we heard just now,’ cried one of them. ‘You puzzled us very much. To what lucky chance are we indebted for the pleasure of seeing you in these parts?’

I related my adventures of the preceding days in a few words, and told them my reasons for exiling myself from my family. They listened with great apparent interest and sympathy.

I was just turning away, when I saw a kind of cricket of huge size advancing towards us.

‘Who is that enormous creature?’ I asked, astonished at the appearance of the new-comer.

‘It is a stranger,’ was the reply. ‘He dropped amongst us from the sky the other day. He says he comes from a long distance, and his talk is very strange; he tells such stories—’

‘I tell you nothing but what is true,’ haughtily replied the stranger, who had now approached near enough to hear my cousin’s last words.

‘Come, come, don’t be angry,’ observed one of the latter, laughing; ‘but own frankly that you only meant to hoax us yesterday with your extraordinary history.’

‘Not at all,’ answered the stranger quickly. ‘I have travelled hundreds of miles, swept along by a hurricane which carried me off from amongst my companions.’

‘You hear what he says!’ the cricket whispered to me; adding, in a louder voice, ‘And your travelling companions were very numerous, were they not?’

‘There were thousands of millions of us, and as we flew we formed a cloud several miles in length and breadth, darkening the light of the sun, and spreading terror in the countries over which we passed. Once a cannon was fired at us.’

Hearing the stranger seriously narrate such extraordinary things, I gave my cousins a look of surprised inquiry, and one of them, as he met my eyes, raised his foot to his forehead.

At this significant gesture, combined probably with the expression of my face, they burst with one accord into a roar of laughter and ran off in all directions, leaving me alone face to face with the giant.

I did not feel at all comfortable.

‘Insolent creatures!’ he thundered. ‘Ignorant fools, who have never seen anything but these tufts of heather beneath which they were born! They have nothing but incredulity and mockery for those who know more than themselves.’

‘Well,’ I observed, ‘it must be owned that what you have just told us is extraordinary and, pardon the word, just a little improbable.’

‘Is that any reason why it should not be true? I have merely stated a fact. What interest had I in making them believe it?’

‘None whatever, of course.’

‘You seem more sensible, cric-

ket; *you* do not take me for an impostor.'

'Of course not, of course not,' I answered hurriedly. 'But as for them, you must make excuses; they are but giddy things.'

I was not altogether at my ease, truth to tell, at finding myself alone with this creature, whose mind might really, for all I knew, be deranged. So after bowing to him as politely as I could, I took my leave.

In thinking over this meeting, I recollected having once heard of a family of grasshoppers known as migratory grasshoppers or locusts, who are in the habit of travelling from country to country in vast numbers. Perhaps the one I was leaving was a stray member of that race.

After ten minutes' walk I came to a place where a path from the wood cut across the uncultivated paddock and brought it to a sudden termination. On either side of this path was a steep bank on which nothing grew. The upper edge of the bank consisted of a network of old heather-roots, overhanging the path in such a manner that from the advanced point I had reached I commanded a view of a considerable extent. I stopped perforce. There was no need for me to go any further, and I was about to return as I had come when my attention was attracted by something which surprised me extremely, and held me rooted to the spot.



(To be continued.)

## SWITZERLAND, BY PEN AND PENCIL.

### CHAPTER V. THE LAKE OF WALENSTAD.

THOUGH the wondrous Walensee or Lake of Walenstad, towards which we are now wandering, has been celebrated in many and various tones, its praises have not yet been exhausted. There is, in fact, no song worthy of it; for how can the melody of a little spring ditty express what it requires a full-toned symphony to utter? The Walensee serves as a sort of introduction to prepare the traveller for what awaits him farther on, in the more sublime parts of the country. The lake lies on the threshold of the region of the Alps, and receives the waters of many a swift-flowing stream. The Seez flows into it on the east, close by the little town of Walenstad; on the west, near Wesen, it receives the Linth, and on the south the Murg,—all of which lead, if we will follow them, to the glorious Alps of Glarus and the lower part of St. Gall, to the snowy peaks of the Glärnisch, Clariden, Tödi, Hausstock, and Saurenstock, among whose glaciers they have their source.

We are now in the river-territory of the Rhine, and in the mountain-territory of the Tödi. The latter is monarch of the whole region, and a very splendid kingdom he has. Wishing to be an independent sovereign, he separated himself, just where the Oberalpstock rears itself on high, from the ancient monarch of monarchs, St. Gotthard, and drew away with him a numerous following of stately princes, such as the Wind-

gälle, Scheerhorn, Clariden, and Bifertenstock, and many others, whom he brought into the lake district, into the midst of the Lakes of Lucerne, Eger, Zürich, and Walen. Here he drew up his troops in order of battle, ranging them in three divisions. On the borders of Uri, Glarus, and Schwyz, looking towards the Muotta valley, he placed the range which have the Glärnisch for their chief and leader. The Schild, Mürtschenstock, and Mageren reared their heads between the Rieseten Pass and the Walensee, farther to the east; and the bold peaks of the Seven Churfürsten formed his vanguard in the north, where they joined the precipitous cliffs on the north side of the lake, and sent forth outposts to the east as far as the Rhine, and even beyond it.

The whole extent of country around the lake, from the chain of the Churfürsten down to the Tödi, is extremely beautiful and sublime. You may either wander along the southern shore of the lake, and revel in poetry as you listen to the rustling of the luxuriant foliage overhead, or, if you are an active mountaineer, you may penetrate into the Glarus Alps; while if you have come for the sake of the baths, you may take your fill of peaceful enjoyment at Stachelberg.

Glarus was originally a pastoral canton, and is now one of the busiest in Switzerland. Until the sixteenth century its population



lived altogether on the produce of their pastures, on what they earned by cow-keeping and cheese-making. One ancient product of its dairies is the green Glarus cheese, often called herb-cheese, which is well known throughout the whole civilised world, and is still despatched to all parts, being everywhere considered a great delicacy. It is peculiar to the canton of Glarus and its immediate neighbourhood, and owes its colour and smell to a strongly aromatic blue melilot which grows here, and here only. Indeed, scoffers say that you may smell the little canton farther than you can see it.

Those who wish to go up to Stachelberg had better choose the middle one of the three Glarus roads—that, namely, which leads up the Linth or Grossthal. There are two other valleys running parallel with it on the left and right—namely, the wonderful Kloenthal, with its lovely lake, on the east, and the slate-producing Sernthal, or Kleintal, on the right.

Quite in the background of the Grossthal, where it is shut in to the south by the broad stone blocks and glaciers of the Selbsanft, the Clariden, and the Tödi, lies the beautiful valley of Linththal, and opposite it, on a meadow covered with low shrubs and surrounded by pleasant little woods, nestles Stachelberg, close to the Braunwaldberg, and looking far and wide over the valley and mountains from its sunny eminence. The tourist will find waterfalls, meadows, brooks, chalets where he can get milk, villages nestling among trees, and lovely mountain-views, all in the immediate neighbourhood. Everybody goes down to Luchsing, a very favourite resort, or up to the Braunwald, whence the views are very extensive, and probably no visitor to the

baths has ever come away without revelling in the falls of the Diessbach, Fätschbach, and grand Leukelbach. But the tourist will naturally wander farther a-field, and, if he wishes to see a miniature Via Mala, he has nothing to do but to wander farther up the gradually contracting valley till he reaches the modern Pantenbrücke—a bridge flung across the gorge at the height of some two hundred feet above the raging river Linth. It is not far from here to the Uelialp and Sandalp, and when you have reached these you have a whole panorama of mountains and glaciers before you. The great plateau of Urnerboden must not be forgotten, and when there, those who have a mind to do so can descend into the Schächenenthal, in the canton of Uri, which is so full of historical reminiscences. The excursion to the Kloenthal, with its lake, is, however, far pleasanter, and is, indeed, well worth making. The valley is shut in on the one side by the stern cliffs of the Glärnisch, as well as by the Ruchen, Milchblankenstock, Nebelkäppez, Feuerberg, and Brenelsgärtli, and on the other by the Wiggis and his train. The cliffs rise immediately and precipitously out of the lake, which is fed by the numerous streams of snow-water which trickle from their hollows. The valley, with its alternations of meadow-land, copse-wood, rock, and water, is a perfect pastoral poem, and the monumental stone erected to the poet Gessner could not have been more happily placed in any other spot.

The people of Glarus have a great affection for the valley and lake, and on beautiful summer days many a pilgrimage is made to its wooded shores, and the cliffs reëcho with the sound of merry voices. We might make many



COSTUME IN THE CANTON OF GLARUS.

more excursions. Those who wish to go in a southerly direction may take their choice between three passes—the Sandalp-pass, Kisten-pass, and Panixer-pass, all of them rather difficult. They all three lie at the back of

the valleys of Glarus, and lead into the valley of the Vorder-Rhein. But there is another achievement greater than any of these—namely, the ascent of the Tödi, which those who sojourn at Stachelberg will no doubt consider as their crown-

ing feat. Many an eye has looked upon him with wonder and longing as the lord of the Glarus-Alps. The novice, gazing for the first time at the Alpine world from the Uetliberg in Zürich, is sure to have his attention immediately attracted by this magnificent mountain, which cannot fail to strike him both by its gigantic proportions and by its calm dignity. Its snowy crest is visible from the most distant mountains of Bavaria and Tyrol; and the whole of East Switzerland and the Northern Alps, from the Crispalt to the Calanda, look up

to the Tödi as their supreme and only monarch. The solid mighty mass rises broadly and majestically to a height of more than eleven thousand feet, having its buttresses firmly planted in the Russein-thal, in the glacier-valley of the Bifertenfirn, and in the trough of the Sandfirn. Numerous ice-clad peaks stand around it like so many attendant vassals; but the Tödi, the high and mighty sovereign of the Northern Alps, gleams far above them all, and is always the first to be crowned by the golden beams of the rising sun.

#### CHAPTER VI. THE LAKE OF ZÜRICH.

IF the shores of the Walensee, as well as of many another little lake, are sacred to the dreams and meditations of the Muse of Poetry, the neighbourhood of the Lake of Zürich is surely the domain of the Muse of Science. Science has here been busily employed in investigating the secret of ancient times, and in deciphering the inscriptions which mighty Nature has left not only on blocks of stone at the bottom of seas or lakes, but on many another grand and imperishable monument. Nor has she been unsuccessful: the secret has been disclosed; one veil after another has been removed from the past; and we, who already knew a good deal about the old age of our ancient mother, may now read and wonder at the four great books which tell of her early life. These books are entitled respectively the 'Glacial Age,' 'Stone Age,' 'Bronze Age,' and 'Iron Age.'

Many of the principal scenes in these various acts of the great drama were played out in the

neighbourhood of the Lake of Zürich, in the district lying between it and the Glärmisch and Tödi, and extending to the Rhine or even beyond. A gigantic stream of ice issued in former days from the Alps of Upper Glarus, and advanced through the Linththal and Sernthal up to the Walensee, where it joined the left arm of the Rhine-glacier, after which the two flowed slowly but steadily northwards together. There was not a mountain to stop their course, for the Uetliberg and Albis, though rising more than 2500 feet above the sea, lay buried deep beneath the enormous mass of ice. There was not a lake to be seen; for even the largest of them existed but in embryo, and they were all slumbering in bonds of iron. Patches of earth appeared island-like here and there, but the plants had all migrated, and so had the animals, except such as the marmot, mountain-hare, wild goat, and chamois, which are accustomed to glacial regions, and the reindeer, musk-ox, golden and arctic fox, and

ptarmigan, all of which belong to the extreme north, and can endure frost and cold without inconvenience. The latest discoveries have also proved beyond doubt the fact of man's existence during this reign of death. Traces of him have been found, meagre certainly, but clear enough, in the great album formed by the slate-coal of Wetzikon.

But what sort of life could he have lived, the poor thoughtless child of Nature, in the midst of darkness, privation, and perpetual conflict; here flying before the advance of the glaciers, and there following them step by step as they receded from the bottom of the valleys? This dismal period, however, came to an end at last, and light and warmth once more prevailed over the earth; the glaciers retreated from the plains, and crept farther and farther upwards to their last refuge among the High Alps.

\* Those were very ancient and remote times, when civilisation still lay enveloped in the shadowy mists which precede the dawn. And yet, in spite of the thousands of years which have elapsed since then, our scientific men know something about those ancient days, and have already filled many a volume with the information they have managed to collect upon the subject. Hoary relics belonging to that prehistoric period have been conjured up from their muddy beds at the bottom of the lake, and may now be seen standing in museums, to be wondered at by the highly cultivated of the nineteenth century. Just as the vine-dressers dwelling at the foot of Mount Vesuvius knew of the existence of Pompeii long before it was suspected by the scientific world, so the fishermen of the Swiss lakes were long ago acquainted with

the fact that there was a world buried beneath the waters. As their boats glided over the surface, and they looked down into the slumbering depths in search of their prey, they could see, among the weeds and rubbish at the bottom, rows of piles blackened with age, but arranged in regular order. Many a curse did these useless erections beneath the waters evoke when, as often happened, the fishing-nets got entangled in them; and many a net, too, brought up from the deep at different times gigantic stag-horns, strange-looking potsherds, and wonderful implements. The people looked at these things, shook their heads over them, and then threw them down in the sand on the shore; or sometimes the young people would ask their great-grandfather if he knew anything about the pile-work and other things, and would be told in answer that he could not remember anything about it.

But in the winter of 1853, it happened that the waters of the Lake of Zürich sank lower than they had ever been known to do before; and the people of Meilen, who had seized this opportunity of completing some buildings along the shore, made the discovery that here, too, there were numerous old sharpened stakes, as well as pottery and articles made of stone and bone. The news soon reached the ears of the scientific world, and much zeal was shown in exploring the bottom of this and the other lakes of Switzerland; and the result of these investigations was that much light was thrown upon the 'Pile-building Period,' as the German scientists have named it, an age which dates back more than five thousand years before the dawn of history, and had

until now been completely hidden from us.

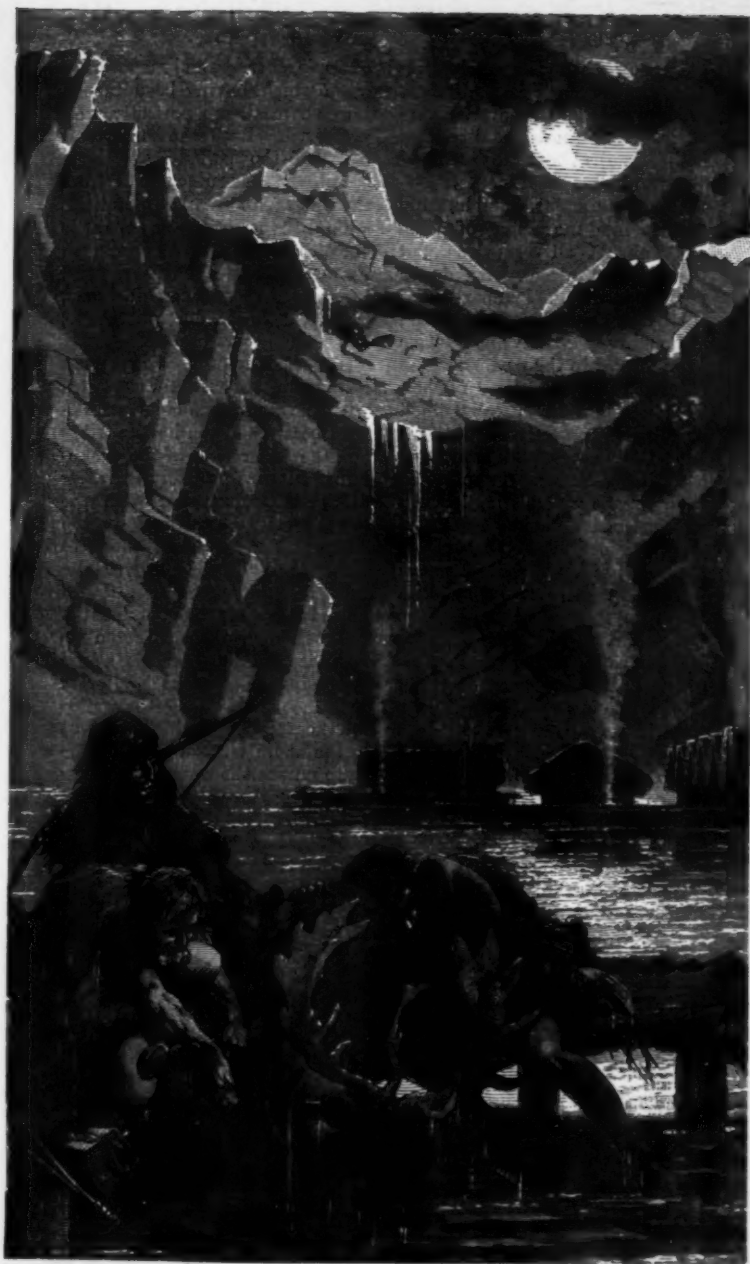
More and more discoveries were made. As soon as the dwellings of that time had been reconstructed — by no means an arduous task — the domestic utensils and hunting weapons, and the remains of plants and animals, all seemed to find their proper places. No doubt remained as to the manner of life led by these ancient people, and although we may have no positive assurance as to their name, we are able to divide the time of their existence into three well-defined ages, called respectively the Stone Age, Bronze Age, and Iron Age, according to the materials of which their weapons and implements were successively made. The Stone Age of course was the earliest; the Bronze Age showed some advance in civilisation; and with the Iron Age we come to the times of the Romans. All the lakes have yielded more remains of the Stone Age than of either of the two others; but all three periods may be best studied at Neuchâtel.

By degrees, whole sets of such things as went to make up the furniture of a pile-dwelling were recovered, and are now to be seen displayed in the museums of various Swiss towns. There are stone hatchets and hammers, spears and darts, all made either of flint, serpentine, rock-crystal, chalcedony, or jasper, and sometimes even of rarer stones; there are implements made of bone, clubs of stag's-horn, daggers of bone, fish-hooks made of the claws and tusks of the wild boar, needles, primitive ornaments for the throat and hair, part of a spindle, even a bundle of flax, yarn for weaving, woven stuff, and netting of various kinds. To complete the picture, some ten different kinds of cereals have been found, various sorts of pulse, bits

of apple, cherries, and raspberries, all of which, having been turned into charcoal, are perfectly well preserved. Both the fauna and flora of the period have been accurately determined, and from the bones found in huge quantities around the piles it seems that the enemies and friends of man in those days were the bear, urus, bison, wild goat, fox, wolf, horse, pig, cat, pole-cat, domestic cattle, and many others besides.

But the men of those days must have had a hard battle for existence with the rough rude elements, the wild beasts, and the hostile tribes 'on the other side of the mountains.' It was probably their fear of the latter, together with the marshy state of the soil on the shore, which induced them to build their dwellings over the waters of the lake. There could not have been much enjoyment of life; there could have been no light-hearted laughter, no sound of singing, as the lake-dweller in his canoe glided over the waters for the purpose of fishing, or went to the shore either to take game or to pursue the wearisome labour of cutting down wood with his flint-axe. The thin walls of his wooden hut afforded him very slender protection against the frequent damp fogs arising from the icy glaciers and all the horrors of a long winter, in spite of his having built his dwelling close up against those of his neighbours, in spite of his having filled up the crevices with moss and clay, and in spite, too, of his having covered the roof with a thatching of pine-branches. There must have been a good deal of wind and plenty of thorough draughts, and, in fact, as says the poet: 'The ancient history of Europe must have begun with colds, toothache, and swelled faces.'

To be sure, among the materials



A LACUSTRINE VILLAGE.



of the huts are to be found hearth-stones and traces of beds, but there were certainly no comforts, and man's only real gratification must have consisted in feasting, to which he doubtless applied himself with all his might and main. The remains of great heaps of bones, which appear to have been gnawed and then thrown into the lake, give us some insight into the nature of his banquets, and even the bill of fare provided.

People fancy they have discovered, even in the Stone Age, some slight tokens of the existence of commerce, carried on of course by means of barter; there is no doubt that it was practised in the later ages, and contributed greatly to the general advance of civilisation. As their weapons improved, people could venture, where the soil allowed it, to settle upon the shore; and if they still used the pile-buildings at all, it was as places of assembly, or for laying up their arms, implements, and winter stores, and suchlike purposes. Both the earlier and later pile-buildings were at last destroyed by fire; but where the fire did not wholly consume it carbonised, and it is to this circumstance that we owe the preservation of many a sub-aqueous museum of antiquities.

The old inscription might still stand over the gates of Zürich—

*'Nobile Turegum, multarum copia rerum.'*

for she may still be regarded, and even more now than formerly, as 'Noble Zürich, where many things are to be found in superabundance,' and she may justly be called 'a very jewel of fruitfulness.'

As to the inhabitants, a dry chronicler of the seventeenth century was moved to write of them in the following enthusiastic terms: 'It is only just to extol the wonderful courtesy, kindness,

and civility of the people of Zürich—their liberality to the poor, their old-fashioned honesty and uprightness, their arts and manufactures, and their great success as well as assiduity in all matters of commerce.' And what she was then that is she still—the chief source and the careful foster-mother of all the civilisation and prosperity of the neighbourhood. The town looks very beautiful as we come up the lake; but whether it be, as a modern English tourist has asserted, the pleasantest and most beautiful old town in our hemisphere next to Damascus, and whether it would be altogether gratified by being compared with the town which lies at the foot of the Anti-Lebanon, encircled by the many-armed Barada, is a question we must leave undecided. Comparisons are odious! To be sure, Damascus lies in the midst of a garden which is lovely to look upon, and sweet with the perfume of orange-flowers; moreover, it is called the first of the four earthly paradises, and viewed from the outside it certainly is most captivating. But within—there are the narrow, crooked, unpaved streets, the ownerless dogs, the dust, filth, laziness, and wretched spirit of *laissez-aller*, which go to make up the internal economy of all Oriental towns. In these particulars the comparison with Zürich would certainly not be at all flattering to the latter. True it is that in some of the old refractory parts in the heart of the town there are still several dark streets and alleys and damp shady nooks—streets where the sun never shines, and no shadows are cast even by the brightest of full moons; but the chief life of the place is concentrated upon the banks of the Limmat and the shore of the lake, and this is the Zürich which the

stranger sees and speedily learns to love. Unfortunately it does not receive much real attention from summer tourists; for after halting at Lake Constance to recruit their strength, and gazing southwards from the banks of the Rhine, either at Basle or Schaffhausen, no sooner do they reach Zürich and get their first glimpse of the only too seductive glaciers, than they feel impelled to hurry on into the land of the Alps. The ordinary visitor, who comes to Switzerland for Alpine flowers and herd-bells, for mountain-forests and snow and ice, will take no delight in modern town-life, with its rattling cabs, servants in red and blue liveries, bustling streets, and roaring factories. He has all that at home; and accordingly Zürich is generally treated as nothing better than the vestibule of Nature's great temple among the mountains; and though the tourist may gaze upon the lake from the charming garden or terrace of that most splendid of all hotels, the *Hôtel Laur*, though he may be in the midst of the most fashionable society, and though the water-nymphs may put on their most bewitching smiles, yet he soon gets weary of it all when once he has fallen under the spell of the lofty mountains.

Those who wish really to study such towns as Basle, Winterthur, Bern, and Zürich must come with other aims, and they must look at them with serious eyes if they wish to be pleased. But if they do come thus prepared, Zürich is sure to fascinate them more than all the rest, and they will be likely to indorse the verdict of Horner, the circumnavigator of the globe, who thus expressed himself: 'I have come back over and over again to my old opinion, that Europe is the

most beautiful quarter of the world, that Switzerland is the most favoured country in Europe, and that the pleasantest place in Switzerland for a man of cultivation to live in is, beyond all doubt, Zürich.'

Even those who bestow but a cursory glance upon it must see that the town is the very centre and focus of a province which has a great destiny before it. It lies in the midst of one of the grand amphitheatres in which the great battle of civilisation is being fought out; and the arena comprises both the extensive basin of the lake and its immediate shores. Behind these the rich fields and meadows slope gently upwards into green hills covered with vines, among which are scattered many pleasant dwellings. Behind the hills rise dark wooded heights, over which a torn jagged wall of mountain looks solemnly down, and the horizon is bounded by the white glaciers of the High Alps. In the midst of this grand landscape lies the proud and commanding town of Zürich, which has attracted to herself all the life of the surrounding hills and mountains, and is the source and centre of all the strength and prosperity of which so many tokens are visible around. Zürich is the Queen of the Land, the splendid Lake-Queen!

Each quarter of the town seems to have taken up one particular branch of industry, that on the left bank being chiefly devoted to manufactures, and that on the right to commerce; while for purposes of pleasant recreation we must seek the suburbs which fringe the lake, or slope upwards among the hills, where we shall find many a tasteful and even splendid villa, surrounded by its own well-kept gardens. In fact, the whole environs of Zürich are

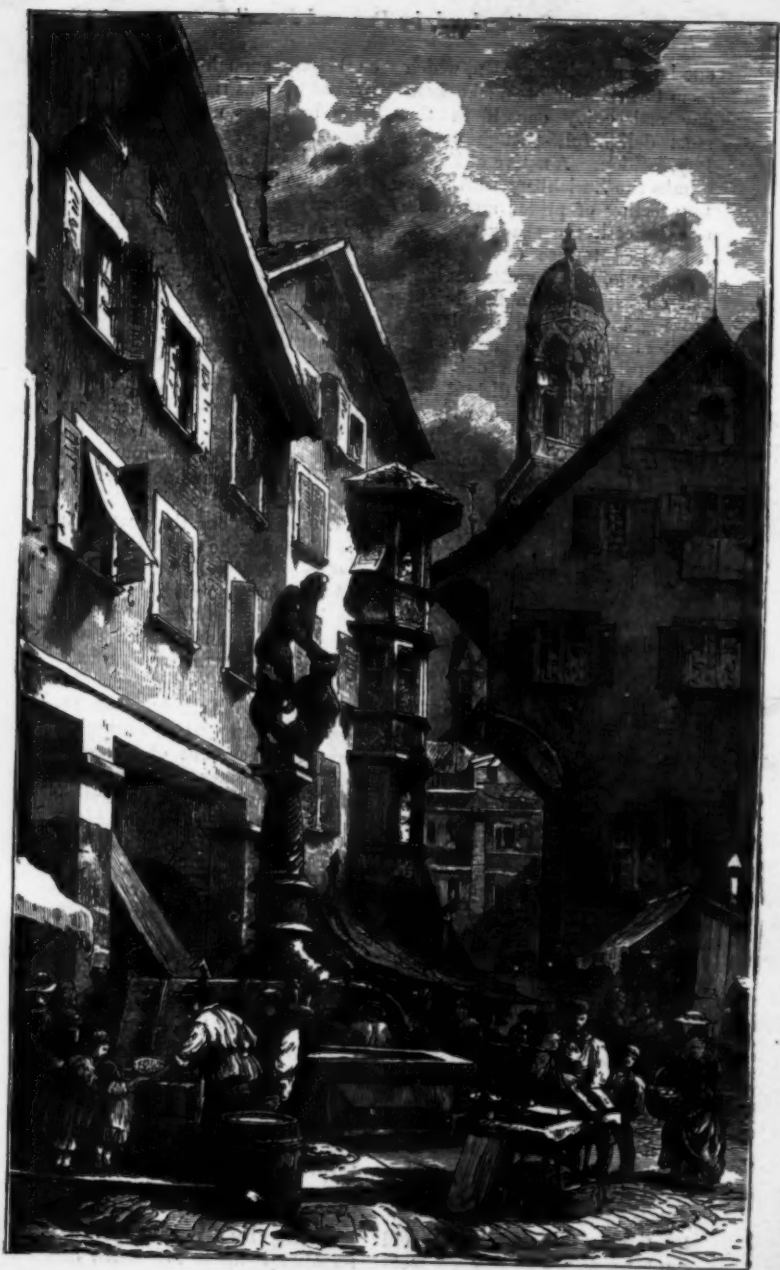
one large park-like garden, which seem to invite one to make holiday and enjoy oneself in the most delightful, though maybe lazy, fashion. A native of Zürich climbs the Zürichberg with a certain feeling of pride; and as he sits beneath the shady trees on the raised terrace of the Höhe Promenade, he congratulates himself on belonging to the bright-looking town which lies below. Visitors will return again and again to gaze at the delightful view of the lake and distant Alps which is to be had from the grand Minster Bridge; or they will go to the neighbouring 'Bauschänzli,' a small island, formerly a bastion, where they may sit in the shade of some tall trees and enjoy the fresh breeze from the lake, while they look northwards at the town, and southwards across the water at the radiant landscape, which rises higher and higher in the horizon until it culminates in the snowy Alps.

On the right bank of the Limmat towers the venerable cathedral, called the Grossmünster, which dates from the eleventh century. It is a simple but noble structure, chiefly in the Byzantine style, though its two fine towers and much of the decoration were added at a later period. The statue on the west tower, representing an emperor with a crown on his head, is said to be intended for Charles the Great, who, as tradition says, conferred many benefits upon the town, and passed some happy days within its walls. Tradition has still many a pretty story to tell of those old times.

Opposite the Grossmünster stands its rival, the stately and splendid Frauenmünster, which is built in the form of a cross, and is of the thirteenth century. In front of it stands the old staple-house, where business went

on briskly enough in days gone by, until it was transferred to the large buildings near the railway-station. The edifice which is reflected in the waters opposite the staple-house is an old church, formerly called the Wasserkirche, or 'church by the water,' which is now used for scientific purposes. Within its walls are contained the Town Library, the Library of the Naturalists' Society, and the Museum of the Antiquarian Society. Looking up from the Wasserkirche is seen a row of hotels built in the most modern style, the grandest of them all being the Hôtel du Lac; and the background is formed by the four fine arches of the Minster Bridge.

The scene along the quay from the Wasserkirche to the Rathhaus is of the very liveliest description, and any one who wishes to count the heads of the two-and-twenty thousand citizens of the inner town cannot do better than take his stand here at certain particular seasons. The Rathhaus has retained very few marks of antiquity, and is, indeed, one of the more modern buildings. Its two predecessors served their generation from the twelfth to the end of the seventeenth century, and the days of the present edifice are surely numbered, for if Zürich continues to increase as it has done of late, it will certainly need a new and finer Rathhaus before long. Its development, which is now so manifest, was for a long time restrained by the iron girdle which encircled it in the form of solid ramparts, dating from mediæval times. But one day the town drew a deeper breath than usual, burst her bands, and from that moment throve as she had never done before, and developed into perfectly symmetrical beauty; the country had long been pushing its way impatiently up to the walls, and



A STREET IN ZÜRICH.

now the two began to melt one into the other. Only a few fragments of the bastions and ramparts were left standing here and there, and these are now chiefly used as spots of vantage-ground whence to survey the surrounding landscape. One of these, standing in the midst of the Botanical Garden, is called the 'Cats' Bastion,' and from it you may obtain a charming view of the new world which has grown up and is still growing along the lake. The 'Cat' is so beautifully situated in the midst of such pleasant green trees and shrubs, that it might well be our favourite spot but for the attractions of the Höhe Promenade and the Uto. The Uto, or Uetliberg, is the northernmost summit of the Albis range of hills; it is also the one which lies nearest Zürich, and commands a perfect panorama. The Albis ridge, which is really an accumulation of rubbish overspread by limestone breccia, rises gradually in the valley of Baar to the south, and then stretches along the western shore of the lake as far as Urdorf, in a line parallel with the river Sihl and the railway, a distance of more than twelve miles. It takes various strange forms in its course, being sometimes crested, sometimes flat, often perfectly bare, at one while destitute of water, and at another thickly wooded. Its chief summits are the Bürglenstutz, Hochwacht, Fallätsche, and Uetliberg.

People used to ascend the Uetliberg on foot and on horseback in somewhat ceremonious fashion; but now, like other Swiss mountains, it has fallen a victim to the railway, and the people of Zürich have one pleasure the more placed within their reach. For now, on fine Sundays, they can go in large family parties, with their wives and children,

to the summit of the chief eminence in the canton of Zürich, where they may refresh the inner man at the various excellent inns which have taken the place of the old robber-castles of Bolkern, Schnabelburg, Hütliberg, and Manegg, and may then join their neighbours or the crowd of tourists in gazing at the town and the lake, and the mountains far and near, large and small, and may try to identify all they see by reference to Keller's capital guide. What a view it is for the eye to wander over! The panoramic view mentions the names of five hundred grand mountains and chains of mountains, from the jagged Säntis, which stands out so boldly conspicuous on the left, to the Bernese Alps, the Alps of Glarus, and the Jungfrau, who just shows her head far away to the right, and the Faulhorn, which is well-nigh hidden in mist. People who give themselves the trouble to make out and identify every peak may certainly flatter themselves that they have accomplished a hard day's work when evening comes; but those who have gazed upon the scene in the silvery light of a clear autumn day, or in the purple splendour of a bright summer evening, will have laid up one magnificent picture the more in the storehouse of their memories. Certainly the Uetliberg is the crown of the rural district of Zürich, but the various places about the lake are so many pearls in the diadem. Küsnacht, Thalwyl, Horgen, Meilen, Wädenswyl, Richterswyl, Stäfa, and many others, are built either close down to the water's edge or upon the hills along the shore, and they all look bright, clean, inviting, and hospitable. They all have their histories, but as we go towards Rapperschwyl, our thoughts are more likely to

revert with quiet sadness to the pleasant little island which rises from out the lake opposite the Castle of Pfäffikon; its name is Ufnau, and it contains the tomb of Ulrich Hutten, the best and most thoroughly German of all the men who lived at the time of the Reformation. The landscape is bathed in cheerful light, the waves flash upon the green fertile shore, and the charming little island is crowned with glorious sunshine.

Blessings upon the poor persecuted child of earth who here found rest, the man of large heart and bold speech, the knight both of sword and of pen! Let all those who rejoice in the national regeneration of Germany bestow a solemn blessing upon the shade of Ulrich Hutten, for this was what he laboured to accomplish. His bold work, entitled *Jacta alea esto* ('Let the die be cast'), aimed at emancipating the people from all and every kind of bondage; and Hutten towers a whole head and shoulders above even his most distinguished contemporary and fellow-combatant Luther, whose battles were all fought in the cause of religion only. But Fortune favoured the little monk, whereas the knightly Hutten continued poor and lonely, and received no favour from any but the Muses—all others forsook him. Prince and people betrayed him; his friends, even the best of them, disowned him; and he wandered, sick and ill, from door to door, finding none who would take him in, until at length he laid himself down to die in this little island in the Lake of Zürich.

Those were the times when a Luther was making the pillars of the Church in Germany to tremble, and when another Ulrich, surnamed Zwingli, who was born in the neighbouring town of Zürich, was hurling a lighted flaming

firebrand into the midst of the world.

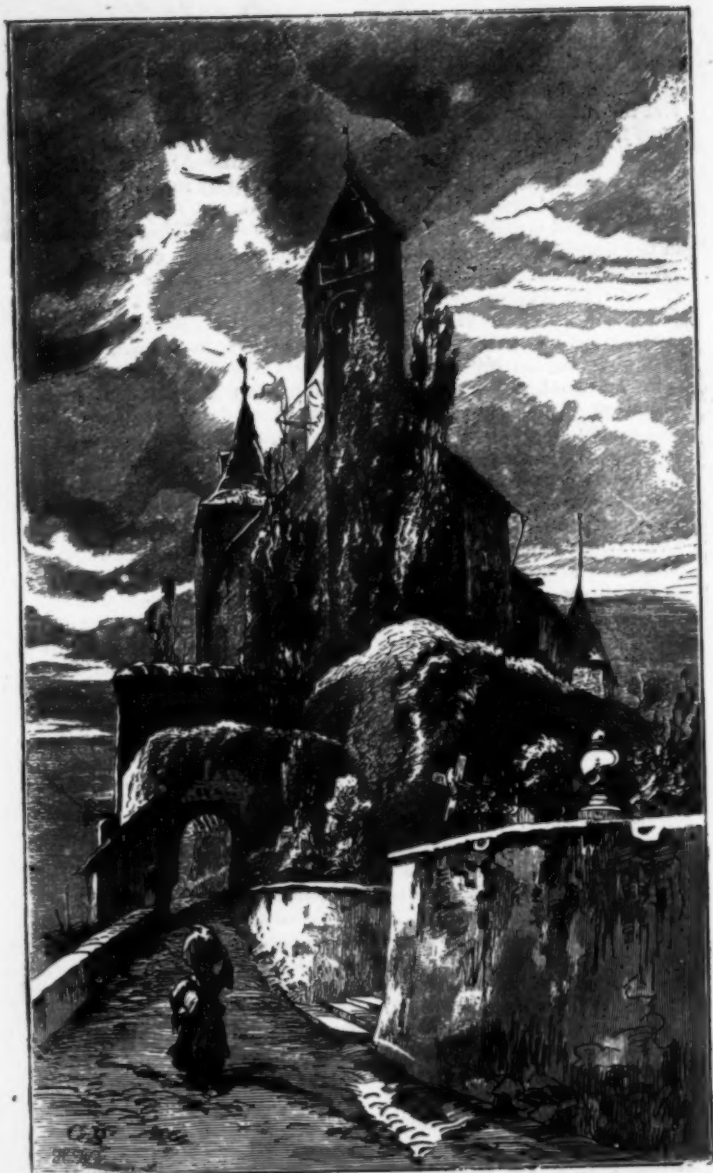
Events followed their natural course, and the world's history moved on across the dead bodies on its way to liberty. But the spirits of Hutten and Zwingli still linger about Zürich; both were heroic men, for Zwingli died in the field with the banner of Zürich in his hand, and the people still follow his invisible flag in thronging crowds.

On reaching the gay harbour of Rapperschwyl the steamer comes to a halt, and the Untersee, or Lower Lake, terminates. On the other side of the long bridge is the Obersee, or Upper Lake, which extends from the ancient town and castle of Rapert to Schmerikon, and has no right to call itself by the name of 'Zürich,' inasmuch as it is bordered by two other cantons, St. Gall in the north and Schwyz in the south.

Two tongues of land jut out here from opposite sides of the lake; and from Rapperschwyl, which stands on the northern shore, the bridge extends completely across the lake into the district of Schwyz. Rapperschwyl, the 'town of roses,' so called not from the fragrant flower of our gardens, but from the stone roses in its coat-of-arms, is a picturesque little old town, built on terraces along the shore, and overshadowed by the old castle of Grafenburg, which stands upon an airy eminence, and once belonged to Rapert the Crusader. Both town and castle have often been hard beleaguered, and shortly before the massacre of Zürich the castle was stormed and burnt.

It is not often that one sees two places so close together which have so exactly kept pace with one another, both in their enterprise and in their civil progress, as the twin-towns of Zürich and Winterthur.





CASTLE OF RAPPERSCHWYL.

As regards the labours of the mind, one is the large brain and the other the small one; in labours of the hands, one is the left hand and the other the right, and the same flag waves from the walls of both. Winterthur is fair to look upon, as well as wealthy, and with these two advantages combined it is not difficult to make some noise in the world. But in spite of the antiquity of her family-tree, the modest little town on the Eulach does not care to be talked about; she lies amid sloping vineyards, pleasantly wooded hills, and the most luxuriant fields and meadows; is thoroughly contented and comfortable too, in a simple way, and enjoys a very happy life. She adorns herself merely for her own pleasure, for she has not many summer visitors; she builds pretty country-houses, lays out tasteful pleasure-grounds, and makes shady walks; and whatever the fathers of the town take in hand, from the building of a fine town-hall to the founding of the bells for the grand church, is all done for the honour of Winterthur. Industry flourishes here as in Zürich, as we may see by a glance at the immense manufactories. Industry has made Winterthur rich and fair, and a joyous spirit of industry seems to pervade the whole town, and to have a pleasantly refreshing effect even upon the passing guest.

The history of Winterthur goes back a very long way, at least as far as that of Zürich, and it is written upon the same pages. There was a Keltic town of Vitudurum before the time of the Romans, who afterwards took possession of and fortified it; and though the Roman Vitudurum may have stood rather on the site of what is now Ober-Winterthur, where many ancient remains are still being constantly discovered

both in the churchyard and in the vineyards of Lömperg, still the modern town is a direct descendant of the old one. The Castle of Vitudurum covered the road leading from Rhaetia to the district of the Alemanni, and a Roman military road led from it to Vindonissa. This road crossed the river Töss by means of a bridge, ascended the Steig, where remains of old pavement are still to be found, and then went on up to Nürensdorf and Baserdorf, whence it descended to Kloten, and so passed on to Vindonissa, which is the modern Windisch, a small place lying between Brugg and Baden, in the interesting canton of Aargau. Thither we are now about to bend our steps; but before doing so, we must pay a visit of ceremony to the splendid old fortress of Kyburg. Most towns in Switzerland, whether large or small, have an old castle attached to them, reminding one of the mediæval seals in brown cases which hang from old parchment documents and deeds of gift. Winterthur has Kyburg and the Castle of Wülflingen; Windisch, or rather Brugg, has no less than the old ancestral Castle of Habsburg; and Laufenburg on the Rhine has the sister-castle, also called Habsburg. The thread which once united the seal to the parchment was severed by the sword of the burghers; and since the severance the towns have continued to flourish, while most of the castles have fallen into decay, and if not altogether overgrown by weeds and grass, are now little more than picturesque ruins. Even the ruins, however, bear witness to the ascendancy and wild feuds of the old Empire, which stretched out her hands far across the Rhine and into the very heart of Helvetia. How often have the walls of these old



CASTLE OF WILDENSTEIN.



castles reëchoed with the party-cries of 'Welf' and 'Waiblingen.' The ruins of the Castle of Alt-Wülfingen, which crown one of the hills on the left bank of the Töss, near the beautiful baronial Castle of Wülfingen, have something to say on this subject; for here the Emperor Henry III. kept his insolent and seditious uncle, the Bishop of Regensburg, closely confined, nor would he release him, in spite of the fulminations of the Pope. Until the fifteenth century it was inhabited by Barons and Counts von Wülfingen; but after that it often changed hands. One of the strangest of its many owners was the presumably mad General Salomon Hirzel, who spent immense sums in finishing and fitting up the interior of the castle, and lived here with his sons in a wild fantastic fashion, until he had squandered his last farthing.

Of all the old castles, that of Kyburg is the best preserved. The rustic old building, with its six towers, still defies all weathers, and presents an appearance so imposing as to command respect even from the nineteenth century. It rises above the wood like a dream of the Middle Ages, or the very embodiment of romance; and the tiny village in front, with its quiet little church, the well-tilled fields on the open sunny hill-side, the tall old lime-trees standing before the ancient gateway, with its coat-of-arms, which leads into the grand courtyard of the castle, all help to complete the strange picture. To make it quite perfect, it needs only that Rudolf of Habsburg should ride forth across the bridge, followed by a train of mounted attendants, with falcons on their wrists and dogs barking at their sides, all on their way to enjoy a day's sport in the forest. But there is hardly a sound to be

heard, and the deep silence is broken only by the hum of the bees in the lime-trees, the tapping of the woodpecker, or the scream of the jay. The castle is spending its old age in profound peace; and, if it be ever disturbed, it is by nothing worse than the bright laughter of young maidens, who come up the beautiful quiet pathway through the wood with the visitors in the summer-time. In their presence the hoary shadows of the past creep back into the twilight of the 'Roman tower,' or into the solemn darkness which enshrouds the chapel of the castle, which is built in the Romanesque style, and was frequented by pious worshippers as early as the eleventh century. The place was formerly inhabited by some of the mighty ones of the earth, an ancient race, whose family-tree had begun to send forth branches as early as the ninth century. They were the Counts of Kyburg, and owned all the land between Kaiserstuhl and Lake Constance; but still, great as they were, it is not to them that the castle owes its historical renown. In 1264, the last Count, Hartmann der Aeltere, died, leaving the place to his nephew, the son of his sister Hedwig, who had married Albrecht von Habsburg; and this nephew, then a dashing young fellow, was afterwards known to the world as the Emperor Rudolf. The beautiful Castle of Kyburg was always a favourite resort of his, and its walls have frequently sheltered not only himself and many of his family, but also the crown jewels of the empire; so its history has been long and varied, and can nowhere be studied to such advantage as here, where we may take note at our leisure of the various additions made to it in the course of centuries. The present owner has handled it



CASTLE OF KYBURG.



reverently, and has shown considerable taste in his pious efforts to preserve it from decay. In this respect Kyburg has been more fortunate than the sister-castle in the district of Aargau, on the other side of the Limmat and Reuss, of which, though it is properly speaking the true cradle of the house of Habsburg, nothing now remains but a few venerable fragments. Here the haughty race, whose descendants now reign in the grand Kaiserburg of Vienna, grew up in the modest-looking castle which crowned the pine-clad height of Wülpselsberg or Willbaldsberg. The only remaining tower is in ruins and overgrown with ivy, and the dilapidated rooms once occupied by the father of emperors are now the dwelling of a fireman. The solemn old walls seem to look down upon modern times as if they were ghosts of the Middle Ages. Close at their feet the locomotive engine rushes by, and the broad high-road is alive with all the bustle of the nineteenth century. There, too, at the foot of the Wülpselsberg, lie the baths of Schinznach, where gaily-dressed fashionable visitors promenade up and down the well-kept walks among shady trees and blooming flowers, or saunter along the avenue of plane-trees by the side of the river Aar, or make excursions to the beautiful castles of Wildegg and Wildenstein, the property of Herr von Effinger, from the grounds of which there is an exquisite view of the Alps and the Valley of the Aar. Indeed, the Castle of Habsburg is planted in the midst of a truly lovely landscape, and from the tall square old keep the view is most picturesque. The scene is the same as that upon which Count Rudolf gazed in his young days, before he wore the imperial crown—there is the site of the

Roman settlement and fortress of Vindonissa, of which there is scarcely a trace now to be discovered above ground; then there is Birrfeld, where Cæsar broke the power of the Helvetii; Neuhof, where the noble Pestalozzi once laboured; and Birr, where his body was laid to rest when his arduous weary course was run; and farther off, crowning the whole, shine the Alps in solemn grandeur. There is an interesting tradition as to the origin of Habsburg, which is sufficiently significant of the bold spirit of the family who owned it. Bishop Werner of Strasburg, being in want of a safe stronghold, asked his brother, the merry Count Radbot von Altenburg, to build him one on the Wülpselsberg. Radbot had considerable sums of money sent him for the purpose, but he spent a very small proportion on the walls and stones, and the castle grew up a very modest structure. There were no fortifications or defences such as the bishop had specially desired; and when he came to view the work which had cost him so dear he was highly indignant. His brother, however, told him to make himself easy and to have patience until the following morning, for that he would raise walls in the course of the night which should be capable of defying the most formidable foe. And lo, when the sun arose next morning, his golden beams were reflected in a wall of steel, formed by hundreds of armed vassals whom the count had brought up and stationed around the castle. This was in the year 1020. The castle was called 'Havesburg,' and from it the Altenburgs afterwards took the name of 'Habsburg.'

The old towers and ruins in this neighbourhood could indeed tell us of many suchlike deeds of



STREET IN AARAU.

blood, but happily their voices are drowned by other and pleasanter sounds; and as we listen to the cheerful hum of industry around, and note the rich beauty of the green fields and blooming orchards which abundantly repay the labour bestowed upon them by the industrious peasant, we feel that the canton of Aargau, or Argovie, well deserves to be called 'The Canton of Culture.' Fortune has greatly favoured it, as we may see by a glance at its pleasant little capital of Aarau; and though poetry may have been driven away by the introduction of chain-bridges, new town-halls, barracks, school-buildings, and museums of natural history, and though all

that was picturesque may have vanished before the presence of cotton and silk factories, still Aarau's prose is worthy of high esteem, since it has contributed to the formation of such a man as Zschokke, the well-known historian and novelist.

Meantime we have been wandering farther and farther away from the Lake of Zürich, and now a short excursion from Aarau to Schinznach or Brugg will take us to the small town and castle of Laufenburg, where we may sit in the pleasant little inn, Zum Bären, near the market-gate, and gaze upon the blue-green waters of the Rhine, or the shady woods by which the town is surrounded.

(To be continued.)

---

## LONDON BIRDS.

---

We have sung for long in the low-wall'd garden,  
 We have flitted among the ivy-leaves;  
 And O, we know that some hearts will pardon  
 The tiny sins of such tuneful thieves.  
 We have flown and hopp'd, to settle and flutter  
 Near some poor toiler's dull window-pane;  
 How happy we were when we heard her utter  
 A gentler speech for our song in the rain!

We have seen some London sights: one neighbour  
 Tending a lonelier, poorer waif,  
 Sharing the fruits of hard toil and labour  
 To lessen her grief, to keep her safe;  
 An old man led by a tender daughter,  
 To feel the kiss of the April sun;  
 A little child lifting a jug of water  
 To help the sick woman, whose work was done.

We flew in the murky air, near an attic:  
 A life struggled up for praise and fame,  
 While the sunset wrote in one hue emphatic  
 Praise and love of the one great name.

To the wistful eyes came a purer glory,  
The poet forgot his efforts to rise  
In reading the beautiful endless story  
Written by God in the evening skies.

What though the bars of that window were narrow?  
There was space for us—from the sunset we stole,  
From the purple and gold—a little brown sparrow  
May soothe and comfort a human soul.  
We paused in the splendour of light, a picture,  
A sweet little picture, to charm his thought,  
To make him forget the blame and stricture  
The busy world to his attic brought.

And now, when the sun has set, the glitter  
Of day has faded, we muse in our nest  
Of that busy world's tangle—its sweet and bitter,  
The tears and laughter that settle to rest.  
We pray in our little way to heaven,  
As we hush to sleep in the clearer breeze;  
And we know that our trespass on fruit is forgiven,  
As we rock on the topmost bough of the trees.

Rest and labour, rest and labour;  
We dream of the shining arbutus berry;  
Rest and labour, love of our neighbour,  
Children's voices to keep us merry.  
We dream of the crumbs strewn by kindly fingers,  
Of peaceful deeds, of merciful words;  
Lastly, the dream of His bounty lingers,  
Who loves and cares for the city birds.

E. M. HARRIS.

---

## CAUGHT.

### IN TWO CHAPTERS.

---

#### CHAPTER I.

On the 8th of August 18—, I left Barbadoes by the mail-boat which was bound for St. Thomas; on the 9th we were close to St. Lucia, when an important part of the machinery broke, thereby stopping our further progress. Our signals of distress were observed by a steamer then going to St. Lucia, which took us in tow. It was the *Edward* of Liverpool, come to fetch sugar, and afterwards to touch at St. Thomas, by way of Dominica. This circumstance seemed almost providential. Our ship being unable to proceed on her way, we should have had to wait ten days for the next packet. By getting on board the *Edward*, I might reach St. Thomas in time to take the mail-boat for Europe. I could not hesitate to profit by the opportunity.

On the evening of the 11th, the *Edward* left St. Lucia. We were seventeen passengers on board, amongst whom were an American merchant, Mr. Thornhill, with his wife and a couple of nice little boys; a Spaniard, Señor Nuñez, with his two daughters, Pedrita and Manuela, charming brunettes (especially the elder), nineteen and seventeen years of age, and to whom a couple of brothers of the same nationality, José and Phelipe Rivero, residing at Porto Rico, seemed to me to pay needlessly assiduous attention. Besides these there were others with whom I scarcely became

acquainted. Nevertheless, one could not help remarking the mixed parentage of two Creole friends, in spite of the pains they took to disguise it. I was the only person belonging to government service, my colleagues having preferred to remain at St. Lucia, and there await some more comfortable means of transport. I should have been wise to do as they did.

The *Edward* was not one of those floating towns in which the passengers hardly know each other by sight. It was therefore a perfectly natural consequence that, after making acquaintance at dinner, Mr. and Mrs. Thornhill, the Spaniards, and myself met in the saloon with the freedom from formalities enjoyed only by travellers. We had music; the two sisters sang, and that exceedingly well, particularly Pedrita, whose sympathetic voice was inspired by an expression which could only arise from nascent, even though perhaps unconscious, love. And there is such a thing, I thought, as love at first sight. But love for whom? Ay, there was the rub. Both girls were remarkable for the unaffected grace which renders Spanish ladies so seductive. In the elder sister this native charm was enhanced by the intelligence which beamed from her bright black eyes, as well as by the clever repartees which fell so naturally from her ruby lips. At least, I thought her clever and intelligent; about her beauty there could be no doubt—

none whatever on my part, and still less, if possible, on the part of José Rivero, who struck me from the first as forward and disagreeable. But long before the evening was over I discovered that between the other two, Manuela and Phelipe, there was evidently a mutual and tender understanding; which, however, was no business of mine, as her father seemed to consider it a matter of course. It was scarcely possible to doubt they were engaged, and that with the old gentleman's full approval.

Next morning we coasted Martinique in the direction of Le Roseau. I had been unable to sleep in consequence of the stifling heat. Perhaps also intrusive fancies, which I could not drive out of my head because Pedrita was mixed up with them, might have kept me awake. Consequently, at the first peep of dawn, I was on deck. A slight mist veiled the sky, across which small clouds were rapidly sailing, at the same time emitting flashes of lightning, noiseless, but incessant. Wild gusts of wind swept from all points of the compass, subsiding into a lull the moment afterwards. The sun rose pale and copper-coloured.

A five years' residence in the West Indies had given me a sufficient experience of hurricanes to be able to guess what was coming. We were threatened with one of those formidable phenomena. My fears being confirmed by the oscillations of the barometer, I did not hesitate to communicate them to the captain, urging him to turn back, and run for shelter in the roads of Fort de France. The captain, however, though an energetic fellow and a good sailor, had but a slight acquaintance with the navigation of the Antilles, combined with

considerable obstinacy. He replied with a jolly Jack-tar's supreme disdain when a landsman meddles with his affairs, 'I know my business without your teaching.' To reason with such pig-headedness was useless, especially as we were approaching Le Roseau (Dominica), where I expected he would be convinced by a voice more authoritative than mine.

Meanwhile my fellow-passengers had risen, and were calmly gazing at the peaks and valleys which indent the whole south coast of Dominica, stretching down to the sea in dark-green slopes, except when broken up here and there by bright-green patches of sugar-canes.

What I foresaw happened. At half-past nine we were about to drop anchor at Le Roseau, when a boat from the port came to order us to make for the offing, as a hurricane seemed imminent. Dominica in fact has not the slightest shelter to offer. A decision had to be taken at once; either to return to Martinique, or to make an effort to reach La Pointe-à-Pitre. The captain chose the second and assuredly the worse alternative, because it gave him the resource, in case of need, of putting into port at Les Saintes, only sixteen miles from the north point of Dominica and thirty-five from Le Roseau. In eight hours we might reach Pointe-à-Pitre, but there was not a single moment to be lost.

We therefore once more skirted the coast of Dominica. The stillness of the air was suffocating. From time to time a puff of wind, coming from the heights, swept noisily down the ravines, but had not the strength to get as far as us. The swell from the north came heavier and heavier, causing our speed to slacken considerably, as our engine was far from powerful. Scarcely had we reached the



channel which separates Dominica from Les Saintes, when the wind rose from the N.N.E.—gusty, but gradually freshening, and raising a sea which made the vessel roll terribly. It was as much as we could do to make headway with the wind constantly in the same direction, and continually increasing in strength. At five in the afternoon we were already under shelter of the last rocks of Les Saintes; but, in spite of all our engineer's efforts, we made no way, and were uncertain whether we could reach our anchorage, or whether we should not be obliged to run out to sea and brave the tempest there. The captain, no longer despising the advice of an obscure civilian, asked me what was best to be done. I advised him to persevere. Between the gusts we might manage to get forward a little, and reach the anchorage of the *Fond du Curé*, which was then only a few cables' lengths off. At worst we could cast anchor where we were. The rain soon added to our difficulties by hiding the land completely from view. A violent squall twisted the vessel athwart the wind, and then the hurricane broke loose. We could only anchor where we were, with fifteen fathoms of water. We cast our two bower anchors, with the whole of their bowline and chain, besides a small anchor and cable—the sum-total of our resources. The ship swung round with her head to the wind, while the engine supported her in front against the violence of the gale and the seas.

We could not, literally, tell where we were. Blinded by the rain, deafened by the wind, we could neither see nor hear the neighbour at our side. Only by the glare of vast sheet-lightning, instantly followed by cracking thunder, could we distinguish the

outline of the land on our star-board. Nightfall increased the horror of our situation.

At nine the wind shifted to the north, still increasing in violence; the squalls roared like a discharge of artillery; the sails, although close-reefed to the yards, were torn away in shreds and tatters; and then the funnel of the steam-engine fell on deck with a crash which made us think our last hour was come.

The captain begged me to go and reassure the passengers, as he was unable to do so himself. In the saloon I found the poor Spanish girls weeping as if their hearts would break, in spite of their father's exhortations, and such comfort as their young compatriots could administer under the circumstances. Mrs. Thornhill was praying beside her children's bed. They were still fast asleep, unconscious of danger. Her deadly paleness increased with every gust of wind, and her lips paused to listen to the storm in the utterance of her half-finished prayer. Her husband, seated by her side, with clenched teeth, closed fists, and half-open mouth, seemed preparing to fight some invisible enemy. He gazed on his wife in silence, while big drops of perspiration trickled slowly down his cheeks. The other passengers were scattered here and there; some made attempts to start a broken conversation, which found no echo. The two Creoles took to drinking to keep up their spirits.

I felt for the poor ladies, and tried to encourage them; but my words were so completely at variance with my thoughts that I could not persuade them into a conviction which I did not entertain myself. In fact, it was evident to me, from the slowness of the change in the wind's direction, that the centre of the hurricane

would pass very close to us. We must therefore expect to experience a further increase of the tempest's violence, and it seemed scarcely probable that our ship could weather it.

To escape from these painful scenes I mounted on deck. It was ten o'clock. The captain shouted in my ear that the barometer was down to 742 millimètres, that the engine had stopped working, and that we should soon be on the coast. He described our situation only too correctly. A few moments afterwards the wind suddenly veered to N.N.W., giving the ship a shock so violent as to break one of the chain-cables. The masts were cut down—a useless sacrifice; for the second chain broke, and we were dragging on our small anchor, which, however, sustained us a little, and saved us from absolutely running before the gale.

The captain had the alarm-gun fired; but as we ourselves could hardly hear the report in the midst of the howling of the tempest, there was little chance of its being noticed at a distance. What help, moreover, could we expect in such weather? Soon the noise of breakers on the rocks was audible. The destruction of the ship was merely an affair of minutes.

A heavy sea breaking over the stern threw everybody off their legs; the ship, reeling round with her broadside to the wind, received blow after blow and capsized, falling on her side to seawards. At the same time a wave, sweeping over the ship, tore away part of the hatches which had saved the saloon from being flooded.

I rushed down-stairs. The despair I beheld there is indescribable. The sisters, hopelessly wring-

ing their hands, uttered inarticulate cries for help; Mrs. Thornhill, exhausted and strengthless, lay on the carpet, leaning against the table, with her younger boy in her arms; her husband, close by, took charge of the elder, who increased their anguish by incessantly wailing, 'Papa, dear papa, O, do take care of me! don't let me be drowned!' While the poor father mechanically and untruthfully answered, 'Don't cry, my child; there is no fear of that. The storm will very soon be over.' It was a painful dialogue to listen to. The other passengers seemed to have lost their senses. The hoarse cries of the Creoles, now completely drunk, increased the horrors of the situation.

The captain gave orders for the passengers to come upon deck, because remaining below exposed them to the risk of drowning. But on deck there was danger of another kind—namely, the chance of being swept away by the waves breaking over the ship. I undertook to bring Mrs. Thornhill up. She followed me without making the least resistance; in fact, she was scarcely conscious of what she was doing. She was then lashed to a capstan near the stern; her elder son was fastened close to her. Mr. Thornhill, who had brought up the youngest wrapped in a blanket, had recovered his energy, together with the hope of saving those so dear to him. He took up his position close by, begging me to join him in watching over their safety. I promised to do so; but went, nevertheless, to assist the brothers Rivero, who could scarcely induce their fair companions to mount, so violent and unreasoning was the terror with which the hurricane oppressed them. In the end we succeeded in placing them against a portion of the deck-house which

had hitherto resisted the force of the storm.

Some ropes had been stretched for the passengers and crew to hold on by and resist the force of the seas which broke one after the other, covering us with a mixture of sand and water. The ship, nevertheless, being completely water-logged, felt the repeated shocks less violently. All we could do was to pray that her carcass and framework might hold together, in which case we might escape.

All at once the vessel upheaved, and then fell immediately afterwards. We disappeared beneath an enormous wave. I said to myself, 'It is all over with us,' and instinctively clung to the little Thornhill who had been confided to my charge. But the wave retreated; the ship had resisted, and we were still alive. I was surrounded by the same persons as before, only I felt a sharp pain in my head. I had received a blow, from what I knew not. At the same moment I heard a piercing cry. It proceeded from the wretched Señor Nuñez, on missing one of his daughters from his side. Pedrita had been swept overboard. He was going to throw himself into the sea after her, and we had difficulty in preventing that act of despair. But what he did not do another, more capable of rendering assistance, had already done. José, after clasping for an instant the hand of his brother, who had neither strength nor courage to detain him, leapt over the netting that stood in the stead of bulwark, doubtless in the hope of saving her, however slight the possibility might be. I was jealous—would you believe it?—of his noble self-sacrifice. Why had I not practised the same devotion myself? True I was occupied, as well as

deeply interested, by my helpless young charge; but the two interests were far from the same either in kind or intensity.

This incident scarcely attracted notice. What signify the misfortunes of others when we are at our last hour ourselves? Their lot may soon be ours; and it was with the energy and rage of despair that every one clung tightly to the frail plank of safety which might shortly be engulfed together with them. At that moment there flashed before me like a transitory vision all the scenes of my early life, my home, and my parents awaiting the son whom they were never more to behold. Then came the image of Pedrita, pale, dead, bruised against the rocks. Poor dear Pedrita! I now felt that she was really dear to me. It was a bitter moment; happily a fleeting one. I was exhausted; my head throbbed with sharp darting pain; my clenched hands had scarcely strength to cling to their support; I still did my best to watch over the Thornhills. The mother and her elder son no longer gave signs of life; the wretched father dared not ask himself whether the something which he clasped to his breast was dead or alive.

Suddenly there fell upon us a calm—unexpected, stupefying. Through a rent in a cloud a star peeped out. Intense lightnings still flashed along the horizon, but with no sound of thunder. We experienced a singular impression, painful rather than agreeable; we seemed to be awakening from a frightful nightmare, escaping from a horrible pandemonium, the offspring of delirium or diseased imagination. The only audible sounds were the waves dashing against the sides of the ship or breaking on the shore. Neither his daughter's carcases nor Phe-

life's exhortations could repress the poor bereaved Spaniard's sobs. One would have said that he cared nothing for Manuela, but that his whole affection was concentrated on the daughter he had lost. It is surely, however, a pardonable weakness when we adorn with every virtue those who have been snatched from us by an early death.

Meanwhile hope returned; the sea raged less violently; the glare of the lightning showed us that a providential chance had cast us on a sandy beach, at only a few fathoms' distance from rocks on which the ship would have immediately gone to pieces. We also fancied we could distinguish the hurried movements of people on shore. Doubtless it was help come to our assistance.

The captain was perfectly aware that this sudden calm would prove of but short duration. An hour's respite was the most we could expect. Towards the north the sky cleared up a little; but to westward black-red clouds were rolling in vast eddies, torn every instant by vivid lightning. There was not a moment to be lost, and the captain was asking who would volunteer to swim on shore with a rope, to open a communication, when the booming of a gun was heard and a cord fell across the ship. The means of rescue had arrived. The cord was soon replaced by a hawser, fastened on board to the stump of a mast, on shore to the trunk of a tree; thus enabling a basket to travel backwards and forwards along the hawser by means of the cord.

One of the sailors undertook the first journey to land and back to test and show the safety of that mode of transport. Mrs. Thornhill and her elder son were the first to be landed without accident; then Señora Manuela,

still bewailing the loss of her sister; next, Mr. Thornhill and his little boy; then came the turn of Señor Nuñez, followed by other passengers, some of whose absurd fears caused considerable delay. Finally I was on the point of bidding good-bye to the Edward myself, when the ship gave a lurch and the hawser broke. Luckily the basket just then was on its return voyage, and consequently empty.

Before communication was re-established the hurricane returned with fresh violence, only the wind had shifted to the S.W. The rain fell again, more heavy than ever. The rolling of the thunder, the whistling of the wind, reëchoed from the neighbouring mountain, once more isolated us from the world of the living. But we ceased to be apprehensive respecting the issue. The islands were a protective breakwater against the waves; the sea became less rough, and we could perceive that the hurricane, pursuing its onward course, was leaving us with the same rapidity as it had reached us.

At one in the morning the weather was supportable; communication with the shore was renewed, and I was one of the first to be sent on land. Scarcely had I arrived there when the reaction from the moral and physical fatigues endured, aggravated by the pain of the wound in my head, brought on their inevitable consequences. I fainted away completely, and fell on the ground as dead.

When I came to myself I was lying in bed. Between the openings of a thick bamboo blind a few rays of sunshine were streaming, in which thousands of brilliant motes were dancing, mixed up with insects with bright shining wings. This spectacle absorbed my whole attention. I

thought only of watching those glittering marvels, which seemed the most beautiful things I had ever beheld. I fretted like a child if they flew away and did not quickly return. On trying to turn an instant the better to observe their movements, the pain made me scream aloud, thereby awakening my intelligence as well as my bodily consciousness. I then looked around with curiosity, asking myself where I could be, why I was in bed, without the slightest recollection of my recent shipwreck. At the same time I raised my hand to my head, which felt as if heavily loaded with lead. It was bandaged. The white-washed chamber, more than plain and modest, was furnished only with the iron bedstead on which I lay, a walnut-wood table and chest of drawers, a looking-glass a few inches square, and two straw-bottomed chairs. A bell-pull hung within my reach; I mechanically seized it. An attendant appeared, and informed me that I was in the military hospital, in one of the rooms appropriated to sick officers, and that my wound was so serious as to need repose. He urged me therefore to keep myself calm, and quietly await the doctor's visit.

---

## CHAPTER. II.

You will remember that, while the ship was stranded, Pedrita had been carried overboard by a wave, and that José Rivero had plunged into the sea, with the hope of rescuing her, at the risk of his life. At that moment the shore was crowded with the inhabitants of the island, who saw the flashes of our alarm-gun, though the hurricane prevented their hearing the report, and who, under

the able directions of M. Richard, the acting commissary, were making every effort to save us from drowning. Their attention was attracted by the young lady's white dress, as she struggled for a moment on the surface. Two sturdy negroes swam to her assistance, and succeeded in bringing her on shore, just in time to prevent her being drawn back into deep water by the retreating waves. She was immediately taken to the village, where Madame Richard kindly received her, and by skilful treatment speedily brought her to life. She anxiously inquired after her father and sister. They reassured her by what they believed at the time to be a pious falsehood, but which soon proved to be the actual truth; for, not long afterwards, the father and daughter were weeping for joy in each other's arms.

The poor old man, on being landed after Manuela had been put on shore, learnt from her that her sister had been saved and was impatiently awaiting their arrival; but overcome as he was by emotion even more than by fatigue, it was all he could do to traverse the short distance which separated him from his recovered child. After their first interchange of affection, Pedrita very naturally inquired what had become of José Rivero. Neither her father nor her sister, in their excusably egotistical joy, had anticipated the question. They hesitated, turned pale, and could give no reply. Nevertheless, they were at last obliged to tell the poor girl that her lover had probably made a useless sacrifice of his life, for he had not yet been found. She heard the news without shedding a tear, simply saying, 'I will go in search of him.' In vain did they insist on the folly of such an

enterprise in her present state of weakness. She walked out of the house with tottering steps and convulsive movements, followed by her friends, who were at their wits' end to know what to do. But after a few paces they were stopped by the information that two men had been found on the shore—one quite dead, battered on the rocks; the other faint and bleeding, but still alive. Both had been transported to the hospital. While the Spaniard and his daughter were still trembling between hope and fear, Phelipe rushed up to them with the welcome news that the living man was his brother. The dead man was the ship's mate, who had been swept overboard unperceived, and doubtless during the second burst of the hurricane; the poor fellow had been literally brayed. Besides him two other victims of the shipwreck were found; namely, the Creoles, who had sought in drunkenness a stimulant to their cowardice, and had only found death.

I learnt all this at the hospital while under treatment for the wound in my head, which was doubtless caused by my having been driven by that big wave against the capstan to which Mrs. Thornhill was lashed, while I was looking after the safety of her child. During the morning of my return to consciousness I was several times seized with giddiness, and it was only in the afternoon that Mr. Thornhill acquainted me with the circumstances which I have just related. He added that the Edward was completely lost, and that, the shipwreck having been signalled, he expected very soon to reach Pointe-à-Pitre, whence a government steamer was expected.

In fact, the very next morning he and his wife came to bid me

good-bye, at the same time heartily thanking me for the assistance I was so fortunate as to be able to give them. They warmly invited me to visit them at Boston, U.S., where they intended fixing their residence. The other passengers also took their departure, so that there were left at La Terre d'en Haut—as the place was called—only the Spaniards and myself.

In a fortnight I was sufficiently recovered to leave the military hospital. The first thing after quitting my room was to go and see José Rivero, whom I knew to be still far from well. Ever since the shipwreck he had been delirious, recognising no one about him, sometimes unconscious and motionless, sometimes violently agitated, in which case he uttered incoherent phrases with great volubility, amongst which Pedrita's name was heard more frequently than anything else. Phelipe never left his brother, and Pedrita easily obtained permission to share with the Sisters of Charity from the hospital the task of nursing her lover. Manuela and her father likewise devoted to him a portion of the day.

When I entered the sick man's chamber he was sitting up in bed, with fixed staring eyes, piteously calling for his brother and his bride, and seeming by his gestures to be struggling with some frightful delusion. Pedrita, who was sitting close to the bed, rose, took his hands in hers, and spoke to him softly and affectionately. The sound of that beloved voice acted on him like a charm; he closed his eyes, and fell back on his pillow. This scene, which occurred twenty times a day, wore out the poor girl's strength more and more. She grew pale and thin, but in my eyes only all the more lovely, while fulfilling the office of consoling angel. I would have given



my existence to see her thus at my own bedside, with my hands in hers, and saying, 'I am still here to love you,' as the most effective of cordials.

Well, it is no use denying it. I may as well confess my weakness. The very first time I saw Pedrita, she made an impression on me I had never felt before, but whose depth and nature I was then far from understanding. It was merely natural admiration, I thought, of a very pleasing and lovely young person. The regret at her loss, which I believed to be certain, would have been felt, not merely by myself, but by any person endowed with common humanity. It was only at her lover's bedside that jealousy revealed to me the real state of the case.

When I saw José hanging between life and death, I was even fool enough, and wicked enough, almost to wish that he might die, in the hope that I might have the chance of coming forward as charming Pedrita's comforter.

Two days afterwards, José recovered consciousness, thereby giving her the opportunity of thanking him for risking his own life in the hope of saving hers. Happiness is a powerful restorative, and his return to health made rapid progress.

I ought to have taken my departure at once, but an irresistible power chained me, spellbound, to the spot. My visits to José Rivero were rare, and I especially avoided meeting Pedrita there. When I saw them together, the pangs of jealousy tortured my heart, and it was only by a superhuman effort that my countenance did not reveal my sufferings. Señor Nuñez, who had not the same interest as his daughters in confining himself to the hospital, was glad to accompany me in the

short walks which my state of weakness permitted me to take. We often talked about his daughter, but the worthy old man never suspected that I adored her.

He had left Barcelona, he told me, to establish himself at Porto Rico with his wife and two daughters while they were still quite young. Three years ago his wife died, and the loss rendered Porto Rico so insupportable that he agreed to undertake the management of a commercial house at Tobago. The brothers Rivero were also natives of Barcelona, and their community of origin procured them an introduction to the Nuñez family when they came to settle at Porto Rico. Madame Nuñez had conceived the idea of marrying her daughters to these young men, who were in every respect a desirable alliance; but her death put a check on the accomplishment of the project, although it did not absolutely break it off. Consequently the brothers, on visiting Tobago, met with so cordial a reception from the friends of their childhood that the father's consent was obtained without difficulty. It was decided to celebrate the double marriage at Barcelona, where both couples would settle down, after selling off their property at Porto Rico. Señor Nuñez would leave Tobago and retire from business. It was clear I had not a chance, not a leg to stand on; and yet I could not drive Pedrita out of my head.

I learnt all this during our daily walks amidst the dull and monotonous scenery of La Terre d'en Haut, one of the seven islands which compose the group of Les Saintes. Three only are inhabited; the population—some twelve hundred negroes or mulattoes—is sustained by scanty crops of maize, sweet potatoes, yams, and the poultry to which their climate

seems especially favourable, if one may judge from the delicacy of their flesh. There are also a few middling oxen and sheep, but above all delicious grapes.

France, to whom *Les Saintes* belong, has converted them into a naval penitentiary, and the melancholy character of the landscape is increased by the sight of subaltern officers conducting groups of gray-clad men, who march to their labours with the listlessness peculiar to compulsory prison-work.

The rock is barely covered with a thin stratum of earth. Not a rivulet or brook is to be seen. Here and there the water drains into hollows, forming ponds which the inhabitants guard with jealous care. Those who are too poor to have a cistern in their house have nothing but this stagnant water to employ for household purposes.

These ponds are fringed around their edges with the velvet trumpets of pistias; in the middle grow white nenuphars, which the inhabitants apply to an original use. When inclined to drink, they gather a leaf with its foot-stalk, and then employ the said stalk as a siphon, which conveys the water to their mouth filtered almost clear. In fact, as everybody knows, the floating leaves of nenuphars are attached to the bottom by very long stalks containing large empty spaces, called by botanists lacunes. These lacunes communicate with each other by very small holes, which allow the sucked-up water to pass, but arrest like a strainer the insects, fragments of vegetables, or other impurities which it may contain.

One of these ponds, which bears the pretty name of the Birds' Watering-place, is almost picturesque. Situated on the summit of a lofty hill, whence the eye scans a vast horizon, it is sur-

rounded by the tallest trees which exist on the island. There are fig-trees, studded with small red fruits; tecomas, displaying pale-violet flowers; knotted capers, whose half-open pods are lined within with purple velvet, on which repose, like pearls in a casket, beads of the purest white. Delightful coolness pervades the spot, while the ear is amused by the cheerful chattering of many-hued birds drawn thither by the attractions of food and drink. *Les Saintes* contain none of those charming ferns which are met with at every step in the neighbouring islands. Their place is taken by frightful cactuses armed with spines whose wounds are not unattended with danger. Here may be found the strangest forms assumed by this singular family of plants, which seems to aim at the reproduction of every known shape of geometrical solid. In some spots euphorbias have the mastery; higher up are crotons, whose dull-gray foliage affords scanty protection to a few stunted grasses. In the low grounds, moistened by brackish water, the machineel vigorously spreads its fragile branches laden with shining leaves. If not exactly gifted with the deadly power which tradition has assigned to it, it is nevertheless a dangerous tree. Its juice inflicts a burn on the skin, like the application of a red-hot iron, and its contact with any mucous membrane produces very serious injury. The temptation offered by its golden fruits is less to be feared, because the burning heat they immediately impress on the lips is a sufficient warning not to swallow them.

As I had not been able to attend the funeral of the Edward's mate, I begged Señor Nuñez to conduct me to his grave. After climbing a low hill covered with

sweet-scented but thorny lantanas we entered a deep dell, in the middle of which is a brackish pond surrounded and overhung with thick machineels. I shall never forget the impression made by our descent into this valley of death through the impenetrable shade of those ill-omened trees. I asked myself whether, like Dante, I had not entered a dark forest, morally as well as physically.

The cemetery, situated on a sandy slope, and enclosed by walls of dry masonry, is entered by a little wooden gate. A few decaying crosses with half-effaced inscriptions, a stunted wild vegetation, thousands of holes made by the land-crabs to get at and feast on the bodies interred there, are the most striking features of the spot. In the midst of this scene of desolation our poor mate was laid to take his final rest.

My stay at Les Saintes could not last for ever. I was completely cured, corporeally. A steamer was shortly to touch at Pointe-à-Pitre, and I had no excuse for remaining longer in the island. I was aware that in the course of a few days José would be able to bear the voyage to Guadeloupe. What, then, had I to hope for?

One evening, while strolling about the streets of the village, with all sorts of bitter fancies working in my brain, I found myself face to face with Pedrita. She was alone, returning from the hospital to her lodgings. With the thoughtless egotism of happy people, she began talking of José's recovery and the bright prospects in store for them at Barcelona. Something doubtless in my countenance and manner betrayed my secret; for she abruptly stopped short, and then offering her hand, gravely said, 'Good-bye. Should

you come to Barcelona, do not forget your old shipwrecked friends. I shall tell José I have seen you.'

I could only press her hand to my lips and take leave of her so, without uttering a word. It was impossible for me not to confess that she was a brave loyal girl to the very last.

Since that time, the chances of travel once happened to throw me in the way of the captain of the *Edward*. He shook me warmly by the hand, and in his bluff way said, 'You're wonderfully better now, I see, than when we parted. You were getting sadly spoony over that pretty Spanish girl. Why, it pulled you down worse than the shipwreck did. Nobody could doubt which way the wind blew. Certainly, that Barcelona nut was hard to crack. But you went to market a little too late, young fellow. Other customers had been there before you. Very vexatious, and no mistake! But I don't think you'll die of that complaint. I was once taken bad in the same way myself. It didn't last long; but you do feel very bad while it does last, don't you? My charmer had the sweetest blue eyes you ever saw in your life; but after I was cured I found out she was only a silly nincompoop, who thought it fine to say "No" when she really meant "Yes." It would have been a comfort to her if I had gone into a consumption for love; instead of which I married my present missus, and got fat. You'll do the same before six months are over, and you'll meet with better luck next time. Heart alive! there's as good fish still in the sea as ever came out of it. And as 'tis a long time since we met, suppose we dine together to-day; for I'm off to the West Indies again to-morrow. What say you, eh? That's right! You will.'

c. t.

## TRAINING FOR 'THE EIGHTS.'

---

I BELIEVE that the mothers of Great Britain are apt to be thrown into a state of great mental perturbation by the knowledge that their sons are in that peculiar 'state of life' which is universally known to the initiated, and yet by them so vaguely designated, as *being in training*. There is formed an uninviting picture in the mind—of an emaciated youth with sunken cheeks and hollow eyes, whose daily fare is toast, whose beverage is water, and whose days are entirely devoted to prodigious bodily exercise; and they fondly believe that such a course, if persisted in, will—Well, I cannot say how far they may indulge in the flights of imagination; that depends on the individual. Now this is an illusion which I should like to dispel, and show that we had very 'good times,' to use a pardonable Americanism, training for 'the Eights' last summer. The word 'Eights' alone should suffice to imply that I mean the college-races at Oxford, or rather 'training for the Eights' should imply that I mean training for the college-races at Oxford. Those glorious races I will not describe here; for the names of the crews, and the bumps that they made, were they not written in the columns of the sporting papers?

Of course our Eight, or an eight of ours, had been on the river from the beginning of the term; nay, rumour said that individual members had been at work on 'sliders' long before, and that the 'Vac.' and the boatmen had been the only witnesses of their diligent

efforts. But it was scarcely three weeks before the first of those eight eventful days that real earnest training began. Then it was that a table in hall was set apart down by the door 'for the crew, sir,' as the scout informed the innocent freshman who could find no other resting-place and had esconced himself there. Then it was that Stroke was seen about the quad, buttonholing the casual passer-by, and, in his blandest tones—'I say, old man, you'll give the Eight a breakfast, won't you?' Then it was that our Captain, responding to some mild query, said, in a voice that all might hear, 'I should think so, indeed. We'll go round the Parks to-morrow: all be at the Lodge at seven. And mind you're there, Cox' (this gruffly); 'you'll have to run round—get some of your fat down. I think you ought to go and see all these men in bed at half-past ten' (this last more amenably).

So the next morning saw—well, it was the first day, and I won't say how many of us appeared at the Lodge. But, to make up for it, we all met at breakfast, with one of the 'old men' afterwards—nine of us, including Cox, seated round the irregular tables, fighting for the enormous vessel employed for the concoction of tea, struggling with chops, steaks, poached eggs, watercresses, and last, but not least, the all-important 'squish.' No, I don't know the origin of the word; but it means marmalade. But these first days are irregular—every-

body's fault, particularly Cox's; and of course our Captain said he was the only regular one—said it plaintively, did this much ill-used individual.

We had all been at it hard for a week now. 'Half-past six, sir,' says my scout. And I grunt out, 'Call me again in twenty minutes.' Woe betide me if he fails! He is faithful, and a quarter-past seven sees six of us ready in every kind of wondrous garb. There was one who always wore a 'butterfly' cap, an irreproachable coat, a dirty pair of flannels, and his second-best comforter. We others varied our attire in every stage of the disreputable, having a general look of 'untubbedness' about us, and rather unkempt hair. There were six of us; even that irrepressible Cox, who was hardly ever punctual, had turned up. Said the Captain, 'It's no use waiting for those other fellows; come on.'

So off we went to the Parks, where, just inside the gates, we met Five and Four returning.

'Don't believe you've been round at all,' says Stroke the suspicious. 'Where's the young un?'

That's Four's brother, and the individual in question, it would appear, is seedy; but we know all about that. Said Seven, *which* he was the Captain,

'Now, Cox, you've got to run round.'

'All right; but sha'n't I eat a lot for breakfast?'

'No, I'll be hanged if you do; I'll see to that. Go on, you young—'

But Cox is 'lost to sight, to memory dear,' or, at any rate, out of hearing by this time.

By about a quarter to eight the terriers have been taken to their quarters, and we are back in our rooms, to tub and clothe ourselves in more presentable habiliments.

This matutinal promenade gave, or should have given, the best of appetites for breakfast; but the only unfortunate thing was that the Cox got hungry too. Alas, there was no thinning that Cox!

At half-past eight some two-thirds of the crew are grouped in an uncomfortable sort of mass round the fireplace of our host, waiting for breakfast, the punctuality or unpunctuality of which depends upon the scout officiating. This pause is always awkward, as several of the men are in all probability not acquainted with the owner of the rooms, or at any rate not upon intimate terms. This difficulty Cox would appear fully to appreciate, as he seldom, if ever, entered the room till the rest of the party were well occupied with the first mutton-chops, and received his share of abuse all round in consequence. Then would enter sheepishly the individual so conspicuous by his absence in the Parks; finding it useless to disprove the various depreciatory exclamations that greet him, he is obliged to acknowledge his guilt, whereupon 'No eggs for you this morning!' sternly from the head of the table.

The host on these occasions is quite a subordinate, who finds his time completely occupied in attending to the various dishes of the *menu* I have already mentioned. He not unfrequently finds it incumbent on him in a meek voice to inquire 'how the boat went yesterday,' boating being as likely as not a matter upon which he is profoundly ignorant, or he would not have to ask the question. This very probably gives rise to a hot discussion, in which no opportunity will be spared of abusing Cox for his yesterday's *course*, and—But preserve us from boating 'shop'!

Some one will then exclaim

in a suggestive whisper to his neighbour, 'I wonder if there are any oranges!' If there should not be, our host, who somehow has overheard, apologises profusely, and immediately despatches his scout to procure some. I believe Five and Six were so tenacious about the oranges merely because of the excellent amusement the pips afforded them, for a furious cannonade would be maintained until they were demolished. After having 'satisfied the desire of eating and drinking,' and having made a considerable mess in his rooms, we would tender our thanks to the hospitable friend and disperse.

At one o'clock we met again for a dinner of the plainest—fish, a joint, and pudding somewhat of the kind that the doctor recommends as 'slops.' Rather an uninteresting operation, this midday feeding of the animals; but fortunately it was soon over, and one could do what one liked, short of indulging in any extra victuals or cooling beverages for an hour or so. That is not very long in a period of three weeks' slavery, for the greater part of the mornings was generally occupied with lectures and such considerations.

Then at half-past three or four we all trooped down to the river, and, getting into flannels, perused our sporting oracles and other papers till we were ready to start. Then at length, when all delinquents were gathered in from the tow-path and seated in their places, 'Are you ready? Paddle!' and off we went, to easy by the green barge and row on to Ifley; sometimes returning, and after a pause of an hour or so and some 'tub-pairs,' starting again over the same water to Ifley, to do a 'course,' hard rowing all the way coming up; or passing through the lock, rowing sharp from Ken-

nington Island to Sandford, and gradually home again. Sometimes we did not return from the first journey to Ifley, but passed right on from Kennington and Sandford to Nuneham bridge, and turning just beyond it (Coxens, beware!); then seven miles home again, with a very good appetite for supper after the fourteen or fifteen miles' row. Supper at eight, with the inevitable solids and two glasses of beer (these details!), with surly faces if the work had been unsatisfactory, or an extra glass of beer if the Captain was content; and then the day was over, and half-past ten *should have* seen us all in bed. So three weeks went by—three weeks of something that is far better than slavery, though we were all really slaves to the oar, bound by fixed hours and forms, engaged by a mutual understanding to do whatever our Captain enjoined, till the last of the eight-day races were over.

Therefore let not the mere word *training* strike terror into the hearts of anxious friends. Let those who imagine that it means starvation conceal themselves behind the curtains at a training breakfast, and this will complete the disillusion. No one who has passed through it in his University career will ever forget it. Forget! No; he will rather look back upon it as a pleasant ordeal, and most sociable tyranny. Thus I look back to those bright days—sweeping grandly down the stream in the full summer sun, with the hope of success to flush us.

Should you wish to know what boat this was whose simple daily doings I have chronicled here, I will only say it was a boat that did very well, a boat that did not disgrace its college, a boat that never will.



## A TOUR IN SOUTH AFRICA.\*

THERE are few *littérateurs* who have imported more variety into their labours than the indefatigable author of the work now before us. As a novelist his fame is in all the families and circulating libraries of the kingdom. He is at home in the hunting-field and in the cathedral close; his studies have made him conversant with the rivalries of sporting life as well as the serener and more celestial jealousies of ecclesiasticism. In the latter phase of his activity he has very distinctly coquetted with theology, the only science, except the political and social, with which he appears at all anxious to establish any very vivid connection. The affairs of our planet, with which it appears to be the modest ambition of Mr. Trollope to be familiar, have always had for him a kind of diffused fascination, and the widespread interests of Greater Britain have supplied a patriotic motive to his sympathy and a glow of vigour to his unwearied pen. A year ago his claim to be the all-comprehensive annalist and commentator of colonial life was only invalidated by one single exception: 'South Africa' was the only colony which he had not 'done,' and about which he had not written a book. The present volumes issue *à la bonne heure* to remove the impatient reproach of a past incompleteness; and to Mr. Trollope belongs, we believe, the unique boast—pace Mr. Fox Bourne and others,

who have treated of our colonies collectively—of having bestowed on each the distinction of a separate description.

The annexation of the Transvaal was the circumstance which precipitated in Mr. Trollope's mind a long-standing desire into an immediate resolution. Clearly now, as he writes, there was an additional reason for going. Sir Theophilus Shepstone had

'done a very high-handed thing as to which it might be the duty of a Briton travelling with a pen in his hand to make a strong remonstrance. Or again it might be his duty to pat that sturdy Briton on the back—with pen and ink—and hold his name up to honour as having been sturdy in a righteous cause. If I had premeditated a journey to South Africa a year or two since, when South Africa was certainly not very much in men's mouths, there was much more to reconcile me to the idea now that Confederation and the Transvaal were in every man's mouth.'

If we point out the fact that Mr. Trollope's visit was a hasty one, and that his work suffers in consequence as an incomplete and unsymmetrical record, we may do so not only without ill-nature, but under his own auspices; for it is a misfortune of which he himself makes an ingenuous confession. But he conscientiously endeavours to make up for his own lack of information by consulting the most trusted works, whether historical, popular, legal, or political, bearing upon the questions which he has reviewed; and he has not disdained to supplement the more open sources of knowledge by the reading and consultation of 'almanacs, pamphlets, lectures, letters, and blue-books.'

\* *South Africa*. By Anthony Trollope. 2 vols. (Chapman & Hall, 1878.)

The map which Mr. Henry Hall supplies to the first volume of Mr. Trollope's *South Africa* is to be commended for a like diligence of compilation. All the available official authorities, as well as the independent contributions of travellers and pioneers, have been used in the production of this admirable aid to the identification of events and places, which incorporates additions and corrections from surveys and explorations to the present year, still so youthful, of 1878. On a scale of about fifty miles to the inch, it exhibits the physical and commercial characteristics of the whole country from west to east, and from the Cape of Good Hope to the twenty-fifth degree of south latitude. It thus embraces the western and eastern provinces of the Cape Colony, Griqualand West (more popularly known as the Diamond Fields), Kafraria, Natal, Zululand, the Orange River Free State, and the Transvaal, indicating throughout the mountains, hills, valleys, passes, fountains, ports, towns, settlements, military posts and forts, missionary stations, and railways, the last being distinguished either as complete, or as in progress, or sanctioned. In the course of Mr. Trollope's hurried tour he passed through much of this extensive and most interesting region, one of the most notable exceptions to the exhaustiveness of his itinerary arising from his omission to visit Basuto Land, in the north-east of the Cape Colony, and bounded by Kafraria, Natal, and the Orange River Free State. His adventures are of the mildly exciting order, not calculated, if told by an Othello, whose eloquence required all the advantages of 'most disastrous chances,' to compel the love of a Desdemona, but still adapted, when narrated by Mr.

Trollope, to keep up in the reader a spirit of unflagging attention. We do not purpose to be of his company, therefore, at every step or stage of his journey; it will suffice to join and rejoin him as he passes from point to point of more than common significance and interest. It is not our intention, again, to follow Mr. Trollope at any length into the 'early Dutch history' and the 'English history' of South Africa; for in these departments of his work he is answerable merely for the presentation of materials which he found ready to his hand; and we prefer to give especially the results of his own observation. But we take his narrative of an incident which occurred some twenty years ago, and which he characterises as one that

'seems to be the most remarkable and most unintelligible of all the events known to us in Kafir history. At this time Sir George Grey was Governor of the Colony—a most remarkable man, who had been Governor of South Australia and of New Zealand, who had been once recalled from his office of Governor at the Cape and then restored, who was sent back to New Zealand as Governor in the hottest of the Maori warfare, and who now lives in that Colony and is at this moment—the beginning of 1878—singularly enough, Prime Minister in the dependency in which he has twice been the Queen's vicegerent. Whatever he may be, or may have been, in New Zealand, he certainly left behind him at the Cape of Good Hope a very great reputation. There can be no doubt that of all our South African Governors he was the most popular—and probably the most high-handed.' In his time there came up a prophecy among the Kafirs that they were to be restored to all their pristine glories and possessions, not by living aid, but by the dead. Their old warriors would return to them from the distant world, and they themselves would all become young, beautiful, and invincible. But great faith was needed. They would find fat cattle in large caves numerous as their hearts might desire; and rich fields of flowing corn would spring up for them as food was required. Only they must kill all their own cattle, and destroy all their own grain, and must refrain from sowing a seed. This they did with perfect faith, and all Kafirdom was well-nigh starved to death. The English and Dutch around them did what they

could for their relief—had indeed done what they could to prevent the self-immolation; but the more that the white men interfered, the more confirmed were the black men in their faith. It is said that 50,000 of them perished of hunger. Since that day there has been no considerable Kafir war, and the spirit of the race has been broken.

Whence came the prophecy? There is a maxim among lawyers that the criminal is to be looked for among those who have profited by the crime. That we the British holders of the South African soil, and we only, were helped on in our work by this catastrophe is certain. No such prophecy—nothing like it to it—ever came up among the Kafirs before. They have ever been a superstitious people, given to witchcraft and much afraid of witches. But till this fatal day they were never tempted to believe that the dead would come back to them, or to look for other food than what the earth gave them by its natural increase. It is more than probable that the prophecy ripened in the brain of an imaginative and strong-minded Anglo-Saxon. This occurred in 1857 when the terrible exigencies of the Indian Mutiny had taken almost every redcoat from the Cape to the Peninsula. Had the Kafirs tried their old method of warfare at such a period, it might have gone very hard indeed with the Dutch and English farmers of the Eastern Province.

The cause of this singular freak of superstition is not, however, to be found in the Anglo-Saxon agency which Mr. Trollope accuses; and a more critical memory than his has already called attention to the fact that nothing in the history of the Cape Colony is better established than that a young woman of Krel's tribe, named Nongans, who professed to speak under inspiration, was the author of this unfortunate prophecy. 'Nongans was a Kafir medium, and the tribe unluckily yielded to an impulse of credulity as respects the supernatural, which is far from being confined to savages.'

Frequently in the course of Mr. Trollope's pages he moralises over the relative failure of South Africa as a sphere of British colonisation, as compared with the younger settlements in Australia and New Zealand; and the ever-recurring reason, expressed

in slightly varying terms, is said to be the unwillingness of the British emigrant to seek a country where he would have to encounter in the lists of labour the antagonism of his red or black brethren. In one of its forms this reason is embodied in the following extract from the chapter devoted to a description of Capetown:

'The population is something over 30,000, which, when we remember that the place is more than two centuries old, and that it is the capital of an enormous country, and the seat of the colonial legislature, is not great. Melbourne, which is just two hundred years younger than Capetown, contains above a quarter of a million of inhabitants. Melbourne was of course made what it is by gold; but then so have there been diamonds to enhance the growth of Capetown. But the truth, I take it, is that a white working population will not settle itself at any place where it will have to measure itself against coloured labour. A walk through the streets of Capetown is sufficient to show the stranger that he has reached a place not inhabited by white men, and a very little conversation will show him further that he is not speaking with an English-speaking population. The gentry no doubt are white and speak English. At any rate, the members of Parliament do so, and the clergymen, and the editors, for the most part, and the good-looking young ladies,—but they are not the population. He will find that everything about him is done by coloured persons of various races, who among themselves speak a language which I am told the Dutch in Holland will hardly condescend to recognise as their own. Perhaps, as regards labour, the most valuable race is that of the Malays, and these are the descendants of slaves whom the early Dutch settlers introduced from Java. The Malays are so-called Mahomedans, and some are to be seen flaunting about the town in turbans and flowing robes. These, I understand, are allowed so to dress themselves as a privilege in reward for some pious work done—a journey to Mecca probably. Then there is a Hottentot admixture, a sprinkling of the Guinea-coast negro, and a small, but no doubt increasing, Kafir element. But all this is leavened and brought into some agreement with European modes of action and thought by the preponderating influence of Dutch blood. So that the people, though idle, are not apathetic as savages, nor quite so indifferent as Orientals. But yet there is so much of the savage and so much of the Oriental that the ordinary Englishman does not come out and work among them. Wages are high, and living, though the prices of provisions are apt to vary, is not

costly. Nor is the climate averse to European labourers, who can generally work without detriment in regions outside the tropics. But forty years ago slave-labour was the labour of the country, and the stains, the apathy, the unprofitableness of slave-labour still remain. It had a curse about it which fifty years have not been able to remove.'

Again from the same chapter we transcribe a paragraph which offers an interesting contribution to an understanding of Mr. Trollope's idiosyncrasy, and forms the reason for our already-expressed opinion, that the world is to expect no work on astronomy from his otherwise versatile pen.

'I should weary my reader were I to tell him of all the civilised institutions—one by one—which are in daily use in Capetown. There is a Custom House, and a Sailors' Home, and there are hospitals, and an observatory—very notable, I believe, as being well placed in reference to the Southern hemisphere—and a Government Herbarium, and a lunatic asylum at Robben Island. Of Mr. Stone, the Astronomer Royal and lord of the Observatory, I must say one word in special praise. "Do you care for the stars?" he asked me. In truth I do not care for the stars. I care, I think, only for men and women, and so I told him. "Then," said he, "I won't bother you to come to the Observatory. But if you wish to see stars I will show them to you." I took him at his word and did not then go to the Observatory. This I had said with some fear and trembling, as I remembered well the disgust which Agassiz once expressed when I asked permission not to be shown his museum at Cambridge, Massachusetts. But Mr. Stone seemed to understand my deficiency, and if he pitied me he abstained from expressing his pity. Afterwards I did make a special visit to the Observatory—which is maintained by the imperial Government and not by the Colony—and was shown all the wonders of the southern heavens. They were very beautiful, but I did not understand much about them.'

Mr. Trollope, however, is not insensible to the charms and the grandeur of terrestrial scenery, and he frequently expresses his admiration of the garden-like beauty of the vineyards and orange-groves, as well as the romance of the woods and the caves, and the sublimity of the mountains, which he observed in the Cape Colony,

of which the following passage is generally descriptive, although it derives its immediate or occasional inspiration from Robertson, a town and district about a hundred miles to the east, and slightly to the north, of Capetown.

'From Worcester we went on to a little town called Robertson, which is also the capital of an electoral division. The country here is altogether a country of mountains, varying from three to seven thousand feet high. The valleys between them are broad, so as to give ample space for agriculture, if only agriculture can be made to pay. Having heard much of the continual plains of South Africa, I had imagined that everything beyond the hills immediately surrounding Capetown would be flat; but in lieu of that I found myself travelling through a country in which one series of mountains succeeds another for hundreds of miles. The Cape Colony is very large, especially the Western Province, which extends almost from the 28th to much below the 34th degree of latitude S., and from the 17th to the 23d of longitude E. Of this immense area I was able to see comparatively only a small part; but in what I did see I was never out of the neighbourhood of mountains. The highest mountain in South Africa is Cathkin Peak in Natal, and that is over 10,000 feet. In the districts belonging to the Cape Colony the highest is in Basuto, and is the Mont aux Sources. The highest in the Western Province is called The Seven Weeks Poort, which is in the neighbourhood of Swellendam, and belongs to the district of which I am now speaking. It is 7600 feet high. As the first and most important consequence of this, the making of roads within a couple of hundred miles of Capetown has been a matter of great difficulty. In every direction passes through the mountains have had to be found, which when found have required great skill and a very heavy expenditure before they could be used for roads. But a second consequence has been that a large extent of magnificent scenery has been thrown open, which, as the different parts of the world are made nearer to each other by new discoveries and advancing science, will become a delight and a playground to travellers—as are the Alps and the Pyrenees and the Apennines in Europe. At present I think that but few people in England are aware that among the mountains of the Cape Colony there is scenery as grand as in Switzerland or the south-west of France. And the fact that such scenery is close to them attracts the notice of but a small portion of the inhabitants of the Colony itself. The Dutch, I fancy, regarded the mountains simply as barriers or disagreeable obstacles, and the English community which has come since has hardly as

yet achieved idleness sufficient for the true enjoyment of tourist travelling.'

The principal drawbacks to the unlimited prosecution of successful agriculture in the happy valleys which occur between the ridges of more elevated lands are the scarcity of labour and of tanks or reservoirs for the storage of water, which, falling in abundance on the tops and slopes of the hills, runs down to the sea without fertilising the rich but thirsty soil. The population of the Cape Colony is preponderatingly Dutch, and their kindness and good-nature meet with a frank and full recognition from Mr. Trollope.

'I am bound to say that I was never refused anything which I asked of a Dutchman in South Africa. I must remark also that often as I broke down on my travels—and I did break down very often and sometimes in circumstances that were by no means promising—there always came a *Deus ex machina* for my immediate relief. A generous Dutchman would lend me a horse or a cart, or a needy Englishman would appear with an animal to sell when the getting of a horse under any circumstances had begun to appear impossible. On one occasion a jibbing brute fell as he was endeavouring to kick everything to pieces, and nearly cut his leg in two; but a kind-hearted colonist appeared immediately on the scene, with a very pretty girl in his cart, and took me on to my destination. And yet one often travels hour after hour throughout the whole day without meeting a fellow-traveller.'

Mr. Trollope enters somewhat minutely into the art and mystery of ostrich-farming, into the details of which, however interesting, our space will not allow us to follow him. Some of the more salient facts, however, may be stated as he records them:

'I was taken from Grahamstown to see an ostrich farm about fifteen miles distant. The establishment belongs to Mr. Douglas, who is, I believe, among the ostrich farmers of the Colony about the most successful, and who was, if not the first, the first who did the work on a large scale. He is, moreover, the patentee for an egg-hatching machine, or incubator, which is now in use among many of the feather-growers of the district. Mr. Douglas occupies about 1200 acres of rough ground,

formerly devoted to sheep-farming. The country around was all used not long since as sheep-walks, but seems to have so much deteriorated by changes in the grasses as to be no longer profitable for that purpose. But it will feed ostriches.

At this establishment I found about 300 of those birds, which, taking them all round, young and old, were worth about 30*l.* a piece. Each bird fit for plucking gives two crops of feathers a year, and produces, on an average, feathers to the value of 15*l.* per annum. The creatures feed themselves unless when sick or young, and live upon the various bushes and grasses of the land. The farm is divided out into paddocks, and, with those which are breeding, one cock with two hens occupies each paddock. The young birds—for they do not breed till they are three years old—or those which are not paired, run in flocks of thirty or forty each. They are subject to diseases which of course require attention, and are apt to damage themselves, sometimes breaking their own bones, and getting themselves caught in the wire fences. Otherwise they are hardy brutes, who can stand much heat and cold, can do for long periods without water, who require no delicate feeding, and give at existing prices ample returns for the care bestowed upon them.

But, nevertheless, ostrich-farming is a precarious venture. The birds are of such value, a full-grown bird in perfect health being worth as much as 75*l.*, that there are of course risks of great loss. And I doubt whether the industry has, as yet, existed long enough for those who employ it to know all its conditions.

I may add with regard to ostrich-farming that I have heard that 50 per cent per annum on the capital invested has been not uncommonly made. But I have heard also that all the capital invested has not been unfrequently lost. It must be regarded as a precarious business, and one which requires special adaptation in the person who conducts it. And to this must be added the fact that it depends entirely on a freak of fashion. Wheat and wool, cotton and coffee, leather and planks, men will certainly continue to want, and of these things the value will undoubtedly be maintained by competition for their possession. But ostrich-feathers may become a drug. When the nurse-maid affects them the duchess will cease to do so.'

The question of Kafir education is one which receives considerable attention from the hands of Mr. Trollope, as being at once one of the most important that has to be solved in South Africa, and one about which there exists the most violent difference of opinion

amongst those who have lived in any of its colonies. A traveller in the land by associating exclusively with one set of persons would be taught to think that here was to be found a certain and quick panacea for all the ills and dangers to which the country is subjected. Here lies the way by which, within an age or two, the population of the country may be made to drop its savagery and Kafirdom and blanket-loving vagabondism, and become a people as fit to say their prayers and vote for members of Parliament as, at any rate, the ordinary English Christian constituent. Another traveller, falling into another and a different set, will be told by his South African associates that the Kafir is a very good fellow, and may be a very good servant, till he has been brought to sing psalms and to take pride in his rapidly-acquired book-learning, after which point in his education he becomes sly, a liar, a thief, and in all respects dangerous. Mr. Trollope frankly confesses the difficulty he experiences in forming an opinion between these two extremes. Believing most firmly in education, he would cease to believe in anything if he did not believe that education, if continued, would at least civilise; and he can conceive of no way of ultimately overcoming and dispelling what he is obliged to call the savagery of the Kafirs but by education. He recognises the fact as well-nigh a necessity, that whilst dropping something of his ignorance the savage drops something also of his simplicity. He can understand, therefore, why the employer of labour should prefer the unsophisticated Kafir; and he is by no means sure that if he were looking out for black labour, that he might make money out of it, untroubled with any of the desires

and designs of a far-reaching philanthropy, he should not eschew the Kafir from the schools. Mr. Trollope favours the introduction of industrial as well as literary civilisation; the training in useful handicrafts as well as the inculcation of religious sentiment which may be divorced from morality. He approves, therefore, such an institution as that of Lovedale, where upwards of three hundred Kafir lads are trained as wagon-makers, blacksmiths, printers, or bookbinders, or taught to make roads and to cultivate land. He expresses his assurance that no Kafir pupil can remain for years or even for months among European lessons and European habits without carrying away with him to his own people, when he goes amongst them, something of a civilising influence. He may perhaps forget much of the literary acquirement which has distinguished his humble academical career; but 'when he has once learned how to make a table stand square upon four legs, he has gained a power of helping his brother Kafirs which will never altogether desert him.'

In a chapter devoted to the consideration of the 'Condition of the Cape Colony,' Mr. Trollope has the following suggestive remarks as to the value of the diamond fields:

'In the Cape Colony, as in Australia, wool has been for many years the staple of the country; and, as in Australia, the importance, or seeming importance, of the staple produce has been cast into the shade by the great wealth of the gold which has been found there, so in South Africa has the same been done by the finding of diamonds. Up to the present time, however, the diamond district has not in truth belonged to the Cape Colony. Soon after these pages will have been printed it will probably be annexed. But the actual political possession of the land in which the diamonds or gold have been found has had little to do with the wealth which has flowed into the different Colonies from the finding of the treasures. That in each case has come from the



greatly increased consumption created by the finders. Men finding gold and diamonds eat and drink a great deal. The persons who sell such articles are enriched, and the articles are subject to taxation, and so a public revenue is raised. It is hence that the wealth comes rather than from the gold and diamonds themselves. Had it been possible that the possession of the land round the Kimberley mines should have been left in the hands of the native tribes, there would have been but little difference in the money result. The flour, the meat, the brandy, and the imported coats and boots would still have been carried up to Kimberley from the Cape Colony.'

Upon entering Natal we exchange the Kafir for the Zulu, who conceives himself to be a very superior sort of man, not as being equal to the white man, whom he reverences, but as being greatly above the other black races around him. And yet, as Mr. Trollope points out, he is not a man of ancient blood or of long-established supremacy. 'Zululand proper, with which we Britons have no concern, and where the Zulus live under an independent king of their own, is to the north of Natal, lying between the colony and the Portuguese possession called Delagoa Bay.' We transcribe the following account of the dreaded Zulu king Cetywayo, 'the spelling of whose name has become settled, but Cetch-way-o is the pronunciation which shows the speaker to be well up in his Zulu.' Cetywayo is the son of King Panda, who 'seems to have been a fat, do-nothing, good-natured sort of king—for a Zulu; and who died some years since—in his bed, if he had one.'

'Cetywayo has certainly a bad reputation generally, though he was till quite lately supposed to be favourable to the English as opposed to the Dutch. When dealing with the troubles of the Transvaal I shall have to say something of him in that respect. He has probably been the indirect cause of the annexation of that country. In Natal there are two opinions about the Zulu monarch. As the white man generally dislikes the black races by whom he is surrounded and troubled in South Africa—not averse by any means

to the individual with whom he comes in immediate contact, but despising and almost hating the people—Cetywayo and his subjects are as a rule evil spoken of among the Europeans of the adjacent Colony. He is accused of murdering his people right and left according to his caprices. That is the charge brought against him. But it is acknowledged that he does not murder white people, and I am not at all sure that there is any conclusive evidence of his cruelty to the blacks. He has his white friends, as I have said; and although they probably go a little too far in white-washing him, I am inclined to believe them when they assert that the spirit of European clemency and abhorrence from bloodshed has worked its way even into the Zulu court, and produced a respect for life which was unknown in the days of Chaka and Dingaan. It is no doubt the case that some of the missionaries who had been settled in Zululand have in the year that is last past—1877—left the country as though in a panic. I presume that the missionaries have gone because two or three of their converts were murdered. Two or three certainly have been murdered, but I doubt whether it was done by order of the chief. The converts have as a rule been safe—as have the missionaries—not from any love borne to them by Cetywayo, but because Cetywayo has thought them to be protected by English influence. Cetywayo has hitherto been quite alive to the expediency of maintaining peace with his white neighbours in Natal, though he could afford to despise his Dutch neighbours in the Transvaal. It has yet to be seen whether we shall be able to settle questions as to a line of demarcation between himself and us in the Transvaal without an appeal to force.

\* \* \* \* \*

Zululand is one of the problems which have next to be answered. Let my reader look at his map. Natal is a British Colony; so is now the Transvaal. The territory which he will see marked as Basuto Land has been annexed to the Cape Colony. Kafraria, which still nominally belongs to the natives, is almost annexed. The Kafrarian problem will soon be solved in spite of Krell. But Zululand, surrounded as it is by British Colonies and the Portuguese settlement at Delagoa Bay, is still a native country, in which the king or chief can live by his own laws and do as his soul lusts. I am very far from recommending an extension of British interference; but if I know anything of British manners and British ways, there will be British interference in Zululand before long.

In the mean time our own Colony of Natal is peopled with Zulus whom we rule, not very regularly, but on the whole with success. They are, to my thinking, singularly amenable; and though I imagine they would vote us out of the country if a plebiscite were possible, they are

individually docile and well-mannered, and as savages are not uncomfortable neighbours. That their condition as a people has been improved by the coming of the white man, there can be no doubt. I will put out of consideration for a moment the peculiar benefits of Christianity which have not probably reached very many of them, and will speak only of the material advantages belonging to this world. The Zulu himself says of himself that he can now sleep with both eyes shut and both ears, whereas, under tribal rule, it was necessary that he should ever have one eye open and one ear ready for escape. He can earn wages if he pleases. He is fed regularly, whereas it was his former fate—as it is of all savages and wild beasts—to vacillate between famine and a gorge. He can occupy land and know it for his own, so that no chief shall take away his produce. If he have cattle he can own them in safety. He cannot be “smelt out” by the witchfinder and condemned, so that his wealth be confiscated. He is subjected no doubt to thralldom, but not to tyranny. To the savage subject there is nothing so terrible as the irresponsible power of a savage ruler. A Dingaan is the same as a Nero—a ruler whose heart becomes impregnated by power with a lust for blood. “No emperor before me,” said Nero, “has known what an emperor could do.” And so said Dingaan. Cetywayo would probably have said the same and done the same had he not been checked by English influences. The Zulu of Natal knows well what it is to have escaped from such tyranny.

I liked the Zulu of the Natal capital very thoroughly. You have no cabs there, and once when in green ignorance I had myself carried from one end of the town to another in a vehicle I had to pay 10s. 6d. for the accommodation. But the Zulu, ornamented and graceful as he is, will carry your portmanteau on his head all the way for sixpence. Hitherto money has not become common in Natal as in British Kaffaria, and the Zulu is cheap. He will hold your horse for you for an hour, and not express a sense of injury if he gets nothing; but for a silver threepence he will grin at you with heartfelt gratitude. Copper, I believe, he will not take; but copper is so thoroughly despised in the Colony that no one dares to show it. At Maritzburg I found that I could always catch a Zulu at a moment's notice to do anything. At the hotel or the club or your friend's house you signify to some one that you want a boy, and the boy is there at once. If you desired him to go a journey of 200 miles, to the very boundary of the Colony, he would go instantly, and be not a whit surprised. He will travel 30 or 40 miles in the twenty-four hours for a shilling a day, and will assuredly do the business confided to him. Maritzburg is 55 miles

from Durban, and an acquaintance told me that he had sent down a very large wedding-cake by a boy in 24 hours. “But if he had eaten it?” I asked. “His chief would very soon have eaten him,” was the reply.

We cannot accompany Mr. Trollope in his somewhat lengthy story of Langelibalele, for it has been recently before the world in various forms, and our author formally declines to tell it ‘with any pretence of accuracy,’ or with any of the necessary competency of knowledge which should give value and decision to a printed statement. He is more certain about a source of wealth which the future may turn to account in the way of furthering the prosperity of the colony of Natal:

‘Before leaving the Colony of Natal I must say that at this Newcastle—as at other Newcastle—coal is to be found in abundance. I was taken down to the river-side where I could see it myself. There can be no doubt but that when the country is opened up coal will be one of its most valuable products. At present it is all but useless. It cannot be carried because the distances are so great and the roads so bad; and it cannot be worked because labour has not been organised.’

The Transvaal and its affairs may be left to the very recent memory of our readers; and its annexation offers aspects of imperial policy with which they need not be at present engaged. It would be more to our purpose to show, with Mr. Trollope, why we took possession of the Diamond Fields, or Griqualand West, and to estimate the wealth which has accrued to us from the acquisition. We content ourselves with a survey of the present position of the town and neighbourhood of Kimberley, the town to which the diamond-mines have given birth, and which Mr. Trollope regards as one of the most interesting places on the face of the earth, because it is there that the civilising of the savage by regular labour is being carried out with the most signal success.

'Of the national benefit arising from the diamonds there can be no doubt. Whether they have been equally beneficial to those who have searched for them and found them may be a matter of question.

What fortunes have been made in this pursuit no one can tell. If they have been great I have not heard of them. There can be no doubt that many have ruined themselves by fruitless labours, and that others who have suddenly enriched themselves have been unable to bear their prosperity with equanimity. The effect of a valuable diamond upon a digger who had been working perhaps a month for nothing was in the early days almost maddening. Now, as with gold in Australia, the pursuit has settled itself down to a fixed industry. Companies have been formed. Individuals are not suddenly enriched by the sudden finding of a stone. Dividends are divided monthly, and there is something approaching to a fixed rate of finding from this claim or from that, from this side of the mine or from the other. There is less of excitement and consequently less of evil. Men are no longer prone to the gambler's condition of mind which induces an individual to think that he—he specially—will win in opposition to all established odds and chances, and prompts him to anticipate his winning by lavish expenditure—to waste it when it does come by such puerile recourses as shoeing a horse with gold or drinking champagne out of a bucket. The searching for gold and diamonds has always had this danger attached to it—that the money when it has come has too frequently not been endeared to the finder by hard continuous work. It has been "easy come and easy gone." This to some degree is still the case. There is at Kimberley much more of gambling, much more of champagne, much more of the rowdy exhilaration coming from sudden money, than at older towns of the same or much greater population, or of the same or much greater wealth. But the trade of Kimberley is now a settled industry, and as such may be presumed to be beneficial to those who exercise it.'

Mr. Trollope humanely finds a great source of gratification in his oft-reiterated proposition that South Africa is a country of black men, and not of white men. 'It has been so, it is so, and it will continue to be so. In this respect it is altogether unlike Australia, unlike the Canadas, and unlike New Zealand. And as it is unlike them, so should it be to us a matter of much purer gratification than are those successful colonies.'

'In New Zealand we strove hard for this; but in New Zealand the middle of the next century will probably bear of the existence of some solitary last Maori. It may be that this was necessary. All the evidence we have seems to show that it was so. But it is hardly the less sad because it was necessary. In Australia we have been successful. We are clothed with its wools. Our coffers are filled with its gold. Our brothers and our children are living there in bounteous plenty. But during the century that we have been there we have caused the entire population of a whole continent to perish. It is impossible to think of such prosperity without a dash of suffering, without a pang of remorse.

In South Africa it is not so. The tribes which before our coming were wont to destroy themselves in civil wars have doubled their population since we have turned their assagai to ploughshares. Thousands, ten thousands of them, are working for wages. Even beyond the realms which we call our own we have stopped the cruelties of the chiefs and the no less fatal superstitions of the priests. The Kafir and the Zulu are free men, and understand altogether the privileges of their freedom. In one town of 18,000 inhabitants, 10,000 of them are now receiving 10s. a week each man, in addition to their diet. Here at any rate we have not come as a blighting poison to the races whom we have found in the country of our adoption. This, I think, ought to endear South Africa to us.'

Mr. Trollope does not boast that he has visited all South Africa; for the country is very large, so large as to be at present limitless, seeing that we do not as yet at all know our own boundaries. But he has visited the seat of government in each district, and, beyond the capitals, has seen enough of the life and ways of each of them to justify him in his trust that he may fairly be allowed the expression of an opinion upon their condition and prospects. Conceding to him a privilege which he has so well earned, we transcribe, by way of final quotation from his interesting volumes, what he has to say upon a question which is the most 'imperial of all in its interest both to ourselves and our fellow-subjects, present or prospective, in South Africa.

'The great question of the day in England as to the countries which I have just visited is that of Confederation. The Permissive Bill which was passed last Session—1877—entitles me to say that it is the opinion of the Government at home that such Confederation should be consummated in South Africa within the next three or four years. Then there arise two questions—whether it is practicable, and if practicable whether it is expedient. I myself with such weak voice as I possess have advocated Australian Confederation. I have greatly rejoiced at Canadian Confederation. My sympathies were in favour of West Indian Confederation. I left England hoping that I might advocate South African Confederation. But, alas, I have come to think it inexpedient, and if expedient, still impracticable. A Confederation of States implies some identity of interests. In any coming together of Colonies under one flag, one Colony must have an ascendancy. Population will give this, and wealth, and the position of the chosen capital. It clearly was so in Canada. In South Africa that preponderance would certainly be with the Cape Colony. I cannot conceive any capital to be possible other than Capetown. Then arises the question whether the other provinces of South Africa can improve their condition by identifying themselves with the Cape Colony. They who know Natal will, I think, agree with me that Natal will never consent to send ten legislators to a Congress at Capetown, where they would be wholly inefficient to prevent the carrying of measures agreeable to the Constitution of the Cape Colony, but averse to its own theory of Government. I have described the franchise of the Cape Colony. I am well aware that Confederation would not compel one State to adopt the same franchise as another. But Natal will never willingly put herself into the same boat with a Colony in which the negro vote may in a few years become predominant over the white. In Natal there are 320,000 coloured people to 20,000 white. She might still exclude the coloured man from her own hustings

as she does now; but she will hardly allow her own poor ten members of a common Congress to be annihilated by the votes of members who may not improbably be returned by coloured persons, and who may not impossibly be coloured persons themselves.

With the Transvaal the Government at home may do as it pleases. At the present moment it is altogether at the disposal of the Crown. If the Cape Colony would consent to take it, the Transvaal can be annexed to-morrow without any ceremony of Confederation. The Cape Colony would in the first place probably desire to be secured from any repayment of the debts of the late Republic. This would not be Confederation, though in this way the Cape Colony, which will soon have swallowed up Griqualand West, would be enabled to walk round the Free State. But the Boers of the Transvaal would, if consulted, be as little inclined to submit themselves to the coloured political influence of the Cape as would the people of Natal. What should they do in a Parliament of which they do not understand the language? Therefore I think Confederation to be inexpedient.

But though the Cape Colony were to walk round the Free State so as to join the Transvaal—though it were even to walk on and reach the Eastern Sea by including Natal—still it would only have gone round the Free State, and not have absorbed it. I understand that Confederation without the Free State would not be thought sufficiently complete to answer the purpose of the Colonial Office at home. And as I think that the Free State will not confederate, . . . I think that Confederation is impracticable.

It is again the great question of coloured races—the question which must dominate all other questions in South Africa. Confederation of adjacent Colonies may be very good for white men who can rule themselves, and yet not suit the condition of territories in which coloured men have to be ruled under circumstances which may be essentially different in different States.'

## SUBURBAN PEOPLE.

---

WONDERFUL as London is, perhaps its surrounding districts, called 'the suburbs,' which are ever growing more and more distant, are still more wonderful. They are the city's safety-valve for taking off into space, during the night-time, humanity which has existed through the day at high-pressure.

The life of suburban people is unique. Their habits and ways of looking at things are neither those of countryfolk nor of town-folk. We shall jot down a few notes concerning these dwellers in the suburbs, who are neither altogether of the city nor of the country.

What essentially *unmanly* places are the suburbs of London between nine o'clock in the morning and six o'clock in the evening! During these hours the gentlemen are all in town, and with the exception of the few solitary males on duty, such as the postman, the telegraph-boy, and the curate, women reign supreme. This arrangement pleases married ladies so much, that when their imagination soars very high, and they desire the pleasing excitement of picturing horrors, they exclaim to female friends who may visit them from the country, 'What should I do if my husband were at home about the house all day, as yours is? How can you endure it, my dear?' To unmarried ladies, however, this solitude is not so full of charms. Very dreary, indeed, are the faces worn by members of daughterful houses as they sit in the draw-

ing-room window waiting until the evening trains from the city shall return them their 'young men.' It would be a mistake to say that the ladies, in the absence of the gentlemen, spend their time in paying gossiping visits. Owing to the tyranny of cliques, their circle of acquaintance is too small for that. A 'set' seldom consists of more than three or four families, and when fairly enclosed in one of these social cages nothing can be done except to repeat the refrain of the melancholy starling, 'I can't get out, I can't get out!' So many are the social barriers isolating suburban people that, unless you have introductions before settling in a suburb, you may remain in solitude for years. People rather pride themselves on 'not knowing every one,' as they express it; were it not for the discoveries of children and servants, even those who are next-door neighbours would be as ignorant of each other as the snob is of the 'swells' he talks about. It is true that when water runs scarce people may get introduced by the use of a common pump; that much is learned through the one-brick-thick partition walls; that nodding acquaintances are formed after some years' attendance at the same church; nevertheless suburban people are separated from each other on many and strange principles of division. There is, for instance, no chemical affinity between those who keep two servants and those who have only one. Those who live in three-story houses cannot

be expected to recognise the owner of a two-story tenement as a man and a brother. There is generally a little coolness, justified by certain subtleties of social metaphysics, between him whose business relations in town are in soft goods and him who is in the hardware line. You are often made aware of the fact that there are traders and traders, if you hold false views as to the equality of all branches of respectable commerce. One great inconvenience arising from these cliques is that those who intend to marry have a very limited number of candidates to choose from. A young man spends his day in the city, and comes home in the evening to his suburban lodgings. If the vicar be an energetic visitor he may possibly have been discovered by him, and may, by his introduction, come to know one or two families; if not, that shyness which makes an Englishman think twice before trying to rescue a drowning person to whom he has not been introduced, may cause him to be without female friends of the better sort for years. Under these circumstances practical lovers have to see every quality they desire in three or four willing victims at most, rather than waste time sighing after blameless absent impossibles.

Considering how little suburban people know of each other, at least directly, it is no wonder that awkward pauses frequently occur in their conversation. Though every one is stiff, every one abuses 'this unsociable place,' and pathetically laments that the system of cliques should prevail. One of Swift's ironical arguments against abolishing Christianity was that 'the wits would have nothing on which they might divert their spleen;' and it certainly would be dreadful if suburban people had no churches and chapels round

which to centre their discontents, ideas, and ambition. Disestablish, in the sense of abolish, vicars and curates, and you will at once cause a conversational famine. After the weather has been fully discussed, what second question could suburban conversation possibly hit upon except the invariable one, 'What did you think of our vicar last Sunday? For my part, I liked the curate better.' Or, 'I don't at all think the vicar should allow such a young man to preach; he is much too plain in his remarks.' What a chance there is for the would-be plenipotentiaries of the neighbourhood to gain a little importance and publicity in the numerous offices connected with a church! Their names are emblazoned at the end of red-letter advertisements concerning teas, bazaars, and harvest festivals. They are the observed of all observers as they hand the plate on Sunday, and fuss about whenever gas, summer-heat, and heavy sermons cause ladies to faint. On the whole, the suburbs could never get on without churches as centres, round which penny readings, choral societies, Christmas decorations, and, best of all, unmarried curates do congregate.

Next in importance to the clergy come suburban medical men—at least those of them who go their rounds in a one-horse pill-box carriage. After wondering for a long time why these gentlemen never walked, but always drove, even if they had only to go a few yards from home, we asked one of them for an explanation, and his reply was very candid. It was, 'By way of an advertisement. Besides,' he added, 'Mrs. Smith likes people to know that the doctor's carriage is at her door, because it enlists her neighbours' sympathies and brings to her gossip-laden visitors.' There



is a great amount of sameness about all the London suburbs. Hundreds of houses are to be seen in a row, with gardens in front, scarcely differing from each other by a single brick or flower. Behind every 'villa'—which, in suburban parlance, means simply house—there is the same long strip of brown grass partitioned off by caken laths. The inside of all these houses seem to be furnished by one general order. Buckingham House has exactly the same sort of parlour and drawing-room as Elm Grove. The furniture and appointments of Fairfield do not mark any individuality distinguishing its inhabitants from those living in Carribrooke or Camille Villas. Certainly the brass plates on the 'seminaries' for young ladies and gentlemen somewhat differ; for whereas one calls itself a 'Collegiate Institute,' its neighbour and rival will be an 'Academy.' The intelligent foreigner, who sees at a distance a train full of city gentlemen returning from the railway station, must think that their dress and appointments are the regulation of a despotic government. It is said that in China, when your pocket is picked, it is impossible to follow up and detect the thief, because the faces and dresses of all Chinamen are exactly alike. A similarity almost as great is to be seen in a company of city men as they return to their houses, each one swinging a hare or some other equally respectable piece of dinner material.

Though the servant question is a difficulty which presses on all parts of England, it seems to be most felt in the immediate neighbourhood of London. Town servants consider the suburbs too dull; and it is not always advisable, even when possible, to import ser-

vants from the country. Consequently there is an exceeding bitter cry heard throughout the suburbs, asking, 'Do you know of a servant?' A peculiar disease called 'want of servants' has attacked the brains of all mistresses. For this state of things mistresses have themselves in a great measure to blame, though it must be acknowledged they have often much to put up with. The fact is, good servants are spoiled by bad mistresses, and good mistresses by bad servants. We know a house where only one servant is kept, in which in a single year there were eighteen servants. Surely there was something wrong in all persons concerned.

It has been remarked that every circumstance in a person's life, even such an apparently insignificant consideration as the colour of the paper in the room in which he was born, influences and moulds his character. If this be so, the nature of suburban houses must greatly influence their inhabitants. We certainly do not expend more bad taste on our clothes than on our houses. What can compete in ugliness with the castle or tower-shaped villa made of red and yellow bricks, and surrounded by 'pleasure grounds,' through which there are walks bordered by crockery, and swept every half-hour to prevent the possibility of a fallen leaf suggesting Nature? Quicker than a child can build a house of cards does the speculative builder rear his villa. The board 'To be let for Building Purposes' gives place to its successor, 'Genteel Residence to be let or sold,' in less time than honest country people could conceive possible. Young love is very adventurous, and a lately married couple is soon found to build their nest in the half-finished house. It is true they will have

to complete it, at least in points of detail, at their own expense; and by reason of the damp they will find it necessary to make the acquaintance of certain functionaries such as medical and *undertaking* gentlemen; but what matter? All seems fair in the war which house-builders wage against society.

Every suburb contains at least three lending libraries. In these, for one penny you can get the reading of the uncleanest and most 'blood-and-thunder' three volume. Every day yearly subscribers turn in to taste 'the latest.' With diligence a lady afflicted with the sofa-disease can corrupt herself at the rate of three three-volume novels a day. The worst of it is, ladies order their comparatively pure nursery-maids to change these books when perambulating the children past the shops. Of course the most fleshly parts are devoured at street-corners; for crying children are scarcely as interesting as characters found in a highly-spiced novel.

For people who unfortunately suffer from impecuniosity there is great lack of public amusements in the suburbs. It is expensive and inconvenient to go up to town in the evenings, consequently there is no place to go to except parish concerts, missionary meetings, and penny lectures. Of course in summer picnics are attempted, being suggested in the first instance by the parish Sunday school's 'day in the country.' It requires very delicate tact to organise a suburban picnic. Mrs. Smith cannot be asked to meet Mrs. Brown. The four Miss A's have known nothing of the B's since that little jealousy about Mr. C. The D's are too rich to invite to meet the E's; they would feel insulted. Last time the F's

kept themselves to themselves, and went first class when all the rest of us were taken in a lot for half price in the third. These are the considerations that must be pondered over by the vicar's wife in sending out her invitations. Then, again, it is almost impossible to get such things *manned*, as all the gentlemen are in town. As a rule about ten ladies fall to the share of one lucky gentleman. When no social jar has occurred, what mirth and madness fill the heart of those who start on these expeditions! For an hour or two human nature triumphs over conventionality. We never could describe what we felt to be going on between those ten ladies who were taking care of that one gentleman in the long tunnel. Well, though marriages are made in heaven, why may they not be made in a tunnel too?

In spite of all that has been said, we would rather live in a London suburb than anywhere else. There you feel alive, for the beating of the great city's heart is audible. There you can babble of green fields, of cows being milked, and other country delights. And as to those who inhabit the suburbs, if we look on their little jealousies and vulgarities with infinite pity, we ought to feel infinite love also. Tolerance should suggest that in many and most things they are better than ourselves; that every creature is after his kind; and that if God bears with them, the most fastidious may well do so. Surely it is a note of a vulgar and small soul to be cynical and intolerant towards fellow-passengers, who under different forms feel the same joys and sorrows in the swift-sailing, but storm-tossed, ship called Life.

## ACROSTIC RULES.

1. A First Prize of £25, a Second Prize of £10, and a Third Prize of £5 will be awarded to the three persons who guess the greatest number of the fourteen Acrostics which will appear in *London Society* during the year, viz. in the Christmas Number for 1877, in the Numbers from January to December 1878, and in the Holiday Number.

2. The prizes will be paid in money, without any stipulation whatever.

3. If two or more solvers shall have guessed the same number of Acrostics at the end of the year, and so have tied for the Prizes, the Editor reserves to himself the right of determining how these 'ties' shall be guessed off.

4. Answers to the Acrostics must be sent by letter (not by post-card), not later than the 10th of each month, addressed to the Acrostic Editor of *London Society*, at Messrs. Sampson Low & Co.'s, 188 Fleet-street, London, E.C.

5. The answers should be signed with a legibly-written pseudonym, and the names and addresses of the prize-winners will be required for publication.

### No. V.—DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

THE poet crowned with honoured laureate bays

No fairer subject, sure, than this can choose.

Part has he sung in former tuneful lays;

'Tis fit the whole this month inspire his muse.

#### I.

A saw which modern joiners use

Sometimes, as did the ancient Jews.

#### II.

It comes from the sea, from the wide deep bay;

It goes over the hills and far away.

#### III.

Horrid sensation of utter prostration;

Tergiversation on all the creation;

Disinclination for argumentation;

Renewed sternutation with little cessation.

#### IV.

The lowing kine and sometimes wine

Are this, and ladies not too fine.

#### V.

He is hateful and sickens;

It is grateful and quickens.

#### VI.

Sad curse of those in every age and clime

Whose only labour is to kill the time.

#### VII.

Budge doctor from the porch, or is he, rather,

A fine, unfeeling, stern, old Roman father?

#### VIII.

We give his name, of strange financial fame,

To portrait darker than its ebon frame.

THWTA.

*The list of correct Answers to this Acrostic will be published in the May Number of LONDON SOCIETY. Answers must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor of LONDON SOCIETY, 188 Fleet-street, London, E.C., as letters, not on post-cards, and must reach this address by April the 10th.*

## ANSWER TO No. IV. (TRIPLE ACROSTIC).

1. E M M E W
2. A L G A R D I
3. G U E R D O N
4. E L E C T E D
5. R A S H E R S

Correct solutions to the above have been received from Aaraxes, Abacus, Abelard, Acephate, Aces, Acipenser, A Guernseyite, Alma, A. M. C. B. O., A. M. de B., Antagonist, Araba, Arno, 'Arry Repressed, Beatrice W., Blue-Peter, Bonbon, Bon Gualtier, Brief, Bristles, Bumpkin, Cadwallader, Caller Herrins, Castledine, Cat & Kittens, Cats & Co., Cerberus, Chinese Feet, Clarice, C O M, Coup d'Essai, Croydon Cat, Cui Bono, Dixie, Domino, Double Elephant, Elaine, Elisha, Elsinore, Emeric, Etak, Excelsior Jack, F. B. H., General Buncombe, Gimlet-Eye, Gnat, Griselda, G. U. E., Hag, Half-and-Half, Hampton Courtier, Harrow Road West, Hazlewood, H. B., Hibernicus, Ignoramus, Incoherent, Jack, Jessica, John-o'-Gaunt, Kanitbeko, Kew, L. B., Leona, Lizzie, Manus O'Toole, Mignon, Mrs. Dearhat, Mrs. Noah, Mungo, Murra, Newell, Nil Desperandum, Nip, Non sine gloria, Nowhere, No. 2, Old Log, Pat, Patty Probity, Penton, Pockets, Pud, Puss, Racer, Roe, Roman, Rosa A., Shaitân, Sir Hans Sloane, Sir Patrick Felis, Smashjavelin, Spes, Tempus Fugit, The Borogones, The Mad Tea-party, The Snark, Three Gorbs, Thunder, Toby, Toto, Try, Tweedledum, Verulam, Weepplots, Welsh Rabbit, White Lancer, Winter Solstice, and Yours truly—109 correct, and 11 incorrect: 120 in all.

Alma, who last month sent the unsigned solution to No. III., is credited with a correct answer to that Acrostic.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Domino gave 'Hit' for light 6, and Little Mither gave 'Idyl,' 'Doubloon,' and 'Hit' for lights 3, 5, and 6 of No. III. These solvers were of course not credited with correct answers. If exact copies of the solutions forwarded were retained, much imagined wrong on the part of a few solvers, and inconvenience on the part of the Acrostic Editor, might be avoided.

Tweedledum's correction of light 3 of No. III. was received too late.

No other words than those given by the author for the lights of No. III. can be accepted. Various pleas forwarded by solvers have been considered, but having regard to the number who have answered the acrostic accurately in every particular, and to the excellence of the published answer, the proposed alternative solutions cannot be deemed correct. It is to be regretted that one solver, who is also a subscriber to *London Society* from its commencement, writes of discontinuing solving the acrostics, upon disagreeing with one of the lights of No. III. The Acrostic Editor trusts, however, despite this protest, that with restored good-humour his name will appear among the successful solvers of No. V.

Bumpkin is informed that the March Number of *London Society* was published on February 27th; he should therefore have received his copy long before the 5th of March.

THE LIFE OF JOHN RUSKIN

BY JOHN RUSKIN

IN TWO VOLUMES.

LONDON: JOHN RUSKIN

1853.

PRINTED BY J. RUSKIN

THE LIFE OF JOHN RUSKIN

BY JOHN RUSKIN

IN TWO VOLUMES.

LONDON: JOHN RUSKIN

1853.

PRINTED BY J. RUSKIN

THE LIFE OF JOHN RUSKIN

BY JOHN RUSKIN

IN TWO VOLUMES.

LONDON: JOHN RUSKIN

1853.

PRINTED BY J. RUSKIN

THE LIFE OF JOHN RUSKIN

BY JOHN RUSKIN

IN TWO VOLUMES.

LONDON: JOHN RUSKIN

1853.

PRINTED BY J. RUSKIN

THE LIFE OF JOHN RUSKIN